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The Little Encyclopedia
Talks with Correspondents
Over the Wine and Walnuts
Sayings of the Children
Character Sketch Book
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FEMINISM DURING THE RENAISSANCE.*

There are certain questions which, when they have once made their appearance in history, continue to come up, from time to time, under slightly altered forms. Does any serious interest attach to the incorrect or inadequate solutions to these questions hitherto proposed by men? Pessimistic people say "no," and that the celebrated "lessons of experience" are equally futile as regards the progress of society and the conduct of individuals. But there seems a good deal of reason to believe that the pessimists are wrong. It gratifies their somber humor, no doubt, to compare the errors of the present with those of the past, and it sounds wise to remark that the world was not made yesterday and that others have had to struggle with the self-same difficulties which seem, at first sight, to have sprung up but now, with the special purpose of tormenting ourselves. One of these perpetually recurring questions is that of *feminism*—in other words, the woman question. Our women generally are in an excited state, and what chiefly prevents the friends and the foes of their movement from understanding one another is, that they use the same words to signify different things. Comparison is a great help to comprehension. It might, perhaps, shed some light on the discussion, to go back and show what feminism was at the

time when it first began to be talked about among us;—that is to say, in the earlier half of the sixteenth century;—and this is precisely what M. de Maulde La Clavière undertakes to do in his profound and penetrating study of the "Women of the Renaissance."¹ His aim is to exhaust the subject, and give us a sort of Bible of the life of women at that period. He has produced a book replete with facts, quotations, delicate hints and prudent reserves; a book which, to be wholly agreeable, should have been a little less complete; and to be wholly useful, should have been written with a little less desire to be agreeable. By the time we have passed in review all the great ladies whom he commemorates, Italian and French, not to mention the Spaniards, princesses, maids-of-honor, courtesans, and Mothers of the Church;—by the time we have fathomed all the secrets of their mental and their sentimental life, and divined all the artifices of their culture, their costume, their daily regimen and their coiffure, we find our sight a little dazzled, and our attention a trifle overstrained. Still, upon the whole, we get a tolerably clear idea of the revolution which the women of that day conceived, conducted and—failed to accomplish.

During the middle ages, woman had

* Translated for The Living Age.

¹ "Les Femmes de la Renaissance," par M. de Maulde La Clavière. Perrin, Paris.

no personal identity whatever. She existed merely as the member of a family, where it was her place to administer the household and perpetuate the race. She was married when scarcely more than a child, and soon learned to look upon her husband as a master possessed of unlimited power, including the right to beat her, and who often had a heavy hand. Her children were taken from her at an early age; and neither as a young girl nor as a matron had she any life in the sense in which we understand the word to-day.

Did she realize the emptiness of her lot, and repine at it? Probably not; for *ennui* is one of the maladies of a sophisticated period; nor is it likely that she indulged in many dreams; for it is we who people with our own melancholy yearnings those castles of the olden time, where the pressure of practical duties was severe enough to exclude chimeras. Did she suffer? Our worst sufferings are the residue of vanished hopes and disappointed fancies; and if—as we must suppose, she was occasionally very unhappy, at least she did not complain of being misunderstood. She was extremely busy. She had to rise with the dawn, oversee the pages and the maids, regulate the household expenditure for town or country; and she passed a large part of her time at church. She was married to a coarse husband, but, being little more ethereal than he, she did not consider herself a martyr on that account. She did not mind deceiving her lord, being as susceptible as another to the pleasures of sense; but there was no malice in her little diversions, and she was not vain of her conquests. Her place in society was distinctly that of an inferior. Certain poems and romances were beginning to inculcate reverence for women, but all this was mere poetry and romance. The epic, whether

heroic or familiar, the *chanson de geste* and the *fabliau* all alike betray the prevailing sentiment—that of the subordination of women. We detect it even in those writers of the sixteenth century whose views are broadest. We should have no doubt about Rabelais' estimate of woman, even if he had not expressed himself clearly upon this point. "When I say *woman*, I allude to a sex so fragile, so variable, so inconstant and imperfect, that Nature seems to me (speaking with all due reverence), to have departed somewhat from her usual good sense when she made the feminine creature. I have pondered this point hundreds and hundreds of times, and can come to no other conclusion than this: that Nature, in devising woman, had regard to the social delectation of man, and the propagation of the species, rather than to the perfection of multiplicity in the individual."¹ Montaigne is quite of the same mind, though he takes pains to express himself a little less crudely. He does not think that "our women should be maintained in idleness by the sweat of our toil;"² but, on the other hand, while Mlle. de Montaigne keeps the accounts, oversees the farm and directs the masons, he moralizes, perorates, travels, and amuses himself generally; not merely without a shadow of compunction, but in the full assurance that he is neither exceeding the privileges of his sex, nor transgressing its rights. The bourgeois of Molière conceive the rôle of woman after an identical fashion; and a good many of the bourgeois of our own day agree with Molière's. It is a matter of tradition.

The ideas which were destined to modify, for a time, the condition of woman, had their origin in Italy, being, in fact, an essential part of the spirit of the Renaissance. One of these was

¹ Rabelais III. 31.

² Montaigne I. 2.

the notion of the rights of the individual, who had been, up to that period, absorbed in the community, whether civil, religious or domestic, but who now began to be restive under the yoke, and boldly to claim his independence. Men wanted to be *themselves*; to be distinguished from others; fully and freely to develop their own proper faculties, and fulfil their own separate destinies. Each one of us has his own special worth, a treasure of latent energy which it behooves us to render active. This is what "virtue" means. Let the virtue which is within us burn so bright that it will leave a luminous memory behind us in the minds of men. Everywhere there woke the same impassioned desire for personal renown. Another leading motive was the revival of antique ideas concerning the worship of beauty. For centuries, under the Christian dispensation, man had been preoccupied by an ideal of abstinence and sacrifice. He had looked upon life with distrust, and warily shunned the snare of its seductions. Now he went forth to meet it, in confidence and joy. "Everything," says Tasso, in his dialogue on Virtue, "everything assists virtue to the attainment of true happiness;—riches, honors, offices, armies, and all those emoluments which enable virtue to act with greater freedom and splendor. Virtue can make subservient to her ends armor and steeds, rich furnishings, paintings and statues, all the fine armaments of prosperity, no less than the joys of friendship and of brilliant society;—she finds her account in them all." Why, indeed, should we refuse to hear that call to happiness, that stifled cry which breaks from the entire creation? Has not God himself adorned nature with manifold charms? And if he has also made us susceptible to them, is not this a sign of his will? Let us, then, cease to be our own executioners, liv-

ing like paupers amid the wealth so profusely lavished to beguile our short journey across the hospitable earth! Let us unseal the sources of delight, and restore equilibrium among those forces of nature, no one of which is to be despised! Let us put ourselves to school once more, with the Greeks, and re-learn from their teaching and example the secret of a truly harmonious activity.

The middle ages had cowered under the sway of Aristotle. Modern Italy appealed from Aristotle to Plato. From the close of the fifteenth century onward, we can see the theory of neoplatonism taking shape. Plato taught that *ideas*—that is to say, the eternal types of visible things, constitute the only true reality. The soul, entangled in matter, can discern appearances only; but in proportion as it casts off its material bonds, it ascends toward the ideas themselves, beholds them in all their beauty, and springs to embrace them in a transport of love. Hence, through metamorphoses unsuspected by the ancients, arose the doctrine of the two loves; the love of the senses, which is by nature coarse and base, and goes out only to base things; and that of the soul, which is noble and ethereal, which is, in a word, true love. This true love comes from God, and leads us back to Him, but it is woman who inspires it. Thus Bembo, in a celebrated passage: "That earthly beauty which enkindles love is but an influx of the divine beauty which irradiates all creation. Over sweet, regular and harmonious features, it plays like light. It adorns the countenance; its glamor attracts the eye and penetrates the soul, thrilling, enthralling, giving birth to desire. Love, then, is really born of a beam of the divine beauty, transmitted through the medium of a woman's face. But the senses, alas! will have their word. We forget that the source of beauty

is, other than corporeal. We make haste to gratify mere appetite, and so arrive by a short road at satiety, weariness,—sometimes even at aversion."

Nothing could have amazed Plato more than to be told that he was preparing the way for the "regiment" of woman. It was the last thing probably that he intended. But doctrines become transmuted by their passage through the ages. They meet and get mixed with others, and take on the most unexpected hues. Dante impregnated the souls of men with his peculiar mysticism; Petrarch preached the cult of woman, and confounded religion with love. The sentiment of chivalry flamed wildly up before it disappeared in a final blaze of glory, to which the universal popularity of the pastoral lay, and the immense vogue, in all Europe, of such poems as "*Amadis of Gaul*" bear sufficient witness. The average French mind, ever prone to simplicity and good sense, revolted against the vague doctrines of neo-platonism and its double-distilled refinements; but Margaret of Navarre undertook to introduce them among ourselves, and she it is who, in the nineteenth novel of the "*Heptameron*" supplies us with the following definition: "Perfect lovers are those who ever demand, in the object of their love, a certain perfection of beauty, grace and goodness. They tend always toward virtue, and have hearts so brave and true that they would die sooner than decline upon aught that is repugnant to honor and conscience. The sole end and aim of our creation is a return to the Supreme Good; and even while imprisoned in the body, we are striving thitherward. But the senses are our enforced medium of communication, and these are clogged and obscured by the sin of our first parents," etc., etc. Here we have, Platonism joining hands with Cathol-

cism, and such were the elements which woman, ever prone to seize upon any advantage, was about to make subservient to her own glorification at Rome, at Florence, in the courts of Orbino and Ferrara, no less than at those of Francis I. and Henry II. in France. Society felt the working of a novel power.

For woman, it will be observed, no longer admits that she is called to humility and self-sacrifice. She, too, is an individual, and has the right to develop her ego. She takes her place beside man, as his equal, and her destiny is not to be confounded with his. Henceforth she has her own rôle, and that rôle consists in extracting from all things whatever essence of beauty they may contain; in the spiritualization of matter and the introduction of art into life.

To begin with,—life must be suitably adorned. The massive castle, built to sustain the assault of hostile armies, is transformed, illuminated, enlivened, by all the caprices of fancy. Nature is called in to aid the artist; and beautiful sites, and the graces of park or garden enhance the effect of elegant architecture. Sculptors, painters and goldsmiths vie with one another in decking the luxurious dwelling of the new era with the products of their taste and skill; while the statues of goddesses and the portraits of nymphs, in all their dazzling perfection of form, cause woman to be confronted on every hand by her own idealized image. The hieratical stiffness of the old-fashioned chair has given place to all manner of curious and complicated furnishings; and clothes, formerly arranged with a view to the concealment of bodily charms, are now worn with a special view to their display. Golden tresses are uncovered, the neck is bared, the female figure becomes tall and supple. Long meals composed of heavy viands give place to gay ban-

quets graced by conversation and music. Life resolves itself into a succession of festivals, which are no longer mere brilliant episodes, but the natural and the consummate form of contemporary existence. All these beautiful things constitute a fitting frame for the beauty of woman; or perhaps it is her beauty which is reflected in them, and so makes them fair. For there is endless discussion about the theory of beauty—which is so elusive the moment one tries to grasp and define it. It is no paradox to describe a landscape, a work of art, or life itself as beautiful, when the landscape, the work, the life, is transfigured for us by the presence of a woman!

High mental culture having been pronounced the greatest good,—that which most enhances the value of life, women were resolved to compass it. It is not enough to say that the women of the Renaissance were accomplished; they were learned. In Italy they received precisely the same education as the men. Boys and girls studied the same things. Had not Bembo himself said, in so many words: "A little girl ought, by all means, to learn Latin. It puts the finishing touch upon her charms." No one dreamed of questioning this, and accordingly maidens of exalted birth were early set to study the classics. Mary Stuart wrote Latin at twelve. Margaret of Navarre knew Greek enough to read Plato; Queen Elizabeth, at fourteen, translated a work of Margaret's own, entitled the "Mirror of the Sinful Soul." The passion for knowledge was, at that time, universal; but the women of the Renaissance differed from the men of that period, and also, perhaps, from the women of ours, in that they did not learn everything indiscriminately, and for the mere pleasure of learning; they neglected everything which did not appeal to their imagination or their

sensibilities. They neglected science, and revelled in literature and music. Or rather, from the moment that women began to read, their favorite books were those which spoke to them of themselves. Philosophy subtilizes the question of love, and hence women are philosophers. In the poem, the novel, the romance, love is still the paramount theme; and hence these are the forms of literature that always flourish when feminine influence is in the ascendant.

If we attempt to dip into the literature which was fashionable at that time, we find it a strange mixture. The "Heptameron," for instance, is one of the most disconcerting of all books to a modern reader. This collection of excessively steep stories is a book written for edification by a woman of a decidedly didactic turn of mind. In this moral work the most refined morality encounters the easiest, and neither seems to be shocked by the meeting. The details are loathsome; the reflections, excellent. The form of expression is almost as coarse as possible; but this only proves that at that period there still remained a great deal for women to do. Time was needed to substitute decorum, or even decency, for the prevalent grossness of thought and language. It was the same in real life. Spirituality and sensuality flourished side by side without mutual inconvenience. The instances are numerous and striking of intellectual attachments as ardent and more lasting than any mere loves of the flesh. Vittoria Colonna is equally renowned for the passions which she inspired and the purity which she preserved. Michael Angelo fell in love, at fifty, with Marchesa di Pescara, who was then thirty-six,—and whom he never even saw until twelve years later. He loved her neither for her beauty nor for her mental gifts, but simply,—because he loved her. His

passion found expression in glowing sonnets and enthusiastic letters, which the timorous great man wrote and rewrote, and did not dare to send. He asks nothing of the woman whom he worships. He simply devotes his life to her. She dies; and not even the inviolable chastity of death will permit him to touch her forehead with his lips. Young Lescun, terribly wounded at the battle of Paria, has himself carried to the house of "his lady and guardian angel" and dies happy in her arms. The love of Marot for Margaret of Navarre is of the same nature, or even, perhaps, a little less corporeal and more intellectual. Purity is a constant characteristic of the love inspired by princesses. We can hardly reckon Diane de Poitiers among the Platonic mistresses of men. And yet, when we behold a prince and king of France, like Henry II., sincerely and faithfully devoted to a woman twenty years older than himself, where shall we look for a more satisfactory explanation of the "case" than is to be found in those romantic ideas which were derived, in the first instance, from books, but gradually imposed themselves upon real life.

This love, purified of all material taint, and appealing only to the soul, has never been, in spite of the instances which we have named without caring to discuss them,—of very frequent occurrence, even in aristocratic circles. But it offers incomparable opportunities for conversation, since the least Platonic of men must needs borrow the vocabulary of Platonism when they make love in a drawing-room. We are, therefore, assisting at the birth of conversation. A new type has been evolved. Castiglione studies it, in a treatise which becomes famous; and manuals of polite behavior multiply. The person who was then called a courtier, would now be called a man of the world. To be

skilled in all athletic exercises, especially in such as develop grace rather than strength of body, to know a little of everything, and not too much of anything, to be able to talk agreeably upon any subject, to be refined in language, reserved in manner, and gracious to all, both men and women—is not this the whole duty of the worldling? It is universally acknowledged that conversation flourishes only so long as there is a woman of wit and taste to direct it. In those lettered courts, to which rank alone no longer gave access, but where writers and artists were made welcome and gathered in a group about some royal lady, the power to converse became the earnest of a brilliant career, for social relations had already developed into an art.

Such was the seductive exterior of the "feminism" of the Renaissance. It was exclusively aristocratic, never going beyond the narrow court circle. Within these restricted limits, it certainly seems, at the first glance, as though the women had gained their cause and succeeded in their attempt to purify sentiment and soften the brutality of manners. But the truth, unhappily, is that there never was a period more utterly perverted and corrupt than this same sixteenth century, and that, too, in the very circles where the women were conducting their crusade. Is this a mere coincidence, and shall we say that people are not to blame for the era in which they are born? It is true; and yet, the new theories contained, in themselves, the germs of the immortality in question. Platonism is a beautiful dream, and so long as it can be confined to the discussions of philosophers and the stanzas of poets one may enjoy its exquisiteness to the full. But it soon ceases to be so confined; and when it comes in contact with actual facts, the results are some-

times amazing. In other words, the moment this theoretical distinction between pure love and sensual love escapes from the calm sphere of speculation, consequences ensue which are strangely prejudicial to morality. In the non-platonic world, when we speak of an honest woman, our meaning is perfectly clear. Here, we must compromise. The reason why the honest woman of the olden time would not permit a man to speak to her of love, was because the means had not yet been discovered of combining innocence with a keen relish for pleasure. But from this time forward fidelity will be held to reside in acts, and not in sentiments, and the notion will be inculcated that the separation between the soul and the senses is absolute, and that there is no possibility either of inter-communication or of mutual surprise.

Rude virtue is rendered more tender and humane by Platonism, and gently drawn toward the granting of concessions. On the other hand, Platonism is quite capable of imparting a noble appearance to vice. One of the most noted of the Platonists was a certain courtesan, Tullia of Aragon, who wrote a book on "The Infinitude of Perfect Love," and her case was not a solitary one. The most flourishing period of Platonism was that of the greatest ascendancy of the courtesan. The same sort of worship was accorded them as was offered to the titular princesses, and, in a certain sense, they were worthy of it. "Excellent music was to be heard in their apartments. They danced exquisitely. They were surrounded by the choicest works of art. New books lay on their tables, and not infrequently some rare edition, enriched by an autograph dedication in verse. They knew Greek and Latin, and kept up an intercourse with absent friends through the medium of graceful and affectionate let-

ters, which were Ciceronian in style and abundantly witty. In conversation a very moderate stimulus was enough to excite them to eloquent classical rhapsodies, borrowed, indeed, in many cases, from Petrarch or Boccaccio; or even, upon occasion, to a really learned discussion of some point of Roman archæology. Now and then there was a gush of the mystical piety in vogue at that time; and the sonnets of Imperia and Veronica Franco were among the sweetest ever composed by women."⁴ The day when Imperia died, in the full splendor of her twenty-six years, was a day of public mourning in Rome. There are Italian miscellanies composed indiscriminately of the lives of saints and of courtesans. For we may despise the women whom we regard as merely subserving our pleasure; but if beauty is indeed a religion, the courtesan is its priestess and demands due honor. In Athens, ever enamored of beauty, the same phenomena had long before been observed.

The sixteenth century began with an outburst of sensualism, and ended in an outburst of violence, during which feminism went to utter shipwreck. The women could not, of course, have foreseen the religious wars; nor was it their fault that their fragile empire was submerged in blood. Yet the rough manner in which the men regained possession of the world's stage, is not without its lesson. The arquebus had an eloquence of its own, after so much philosophism and dilettantism and æstheticism. It had been lustily asserted that life ought, above all things, to be joyous; that nature is good, and we have but to yield ourselves to her attractions; and a certain number of distinguished and emancipated spirits had repaired to the Abbey of Thelema and erected themselves into an order under

⁴ De Maulde, p. 486.

the rule of their own good pleasure. Events undertook to give them their answer; proving beyond a peradventure that human nature is savage at bottom, and that beauty is indeed "vain" to bridle its instincts.

The fact is that the principle on which the feminism of the Renaissance rested, is fundamentally false. The women of that era wrought only for themselves, and their end and aim was the gratification of their own vanity. They revelled in the general concert of praise, and in the incense burned upon their altars by crowds of adorers. They were flattered when men made believe that they were ready to die for them, and to bless the hand that dealt the fatal blow. All their nice insight did not enable them to detect the essential element of falsity in homage of this description. In their energetic revolt from the time-honored teachings of religion, they declared the age to be ripe, and the moment come, for proclaiming an era of enjoyment. They did not know that to seek pleasure systematically is the surest way to miss it. What madness indeed to regard happiness as the object of life! Since the life of man upon this earth began, who has ever attained it? And if it has escaped the most resolute search, eluded the most passionate pursuit, is not the reason plain—that happiness does not exist? It is only an intellectual conception, an illusion of our own sensibility, and the most chimerical of all. Those who have taken this chimera for the guide of their conduct, have paid for their blunder by going farthest astray. They sought to attain happiness by loading life with the adornments of external elegance, only to find themselves fooled by appearances;—the dupes of the merely accessory. The frame was gorgeous, but it was empty.

It is in this sense that the attempt

of the clever women of the Renaissance might serve as a lesson to their sisters of to-day. Into the feminism of our own time, many new elements enter. There is a species of economic or alimentary feminism, which may be at once set aside; for *we must live*, and this proposition is true, even for women. But men have insidiously invaded the woman's proper province. They have become dressmakers and milliners. Stout fellows may be seen in the shops, daintily measuring off yards of ribbon, or slowly moulding to delicate fingers the supple kid of ladies' gloves. Among the lower classes, the woman often labors while the man gets drunk; and the dowry-hunter is not excluded from good society. Women find these gentlemen poaching upon their manor; they desire to punish them, and they are not to blame. But another and more uneasy species of feminism, and one that makes more noise in the world, consists in laying claim to an independence which would make women the (theoretical) equals, or rather, the exact reproductions, of men. The women of the Renaissance were better advised. They understood very well that, if they would exercise any real influence, they must remain *women*. They never protested against the ancient institution of marriage, because they knew they had all to lose and nothing to gain by its abolition. The mistake they made was in thinking that they could refine its coarseness and ennoble its platitude by sentimental subtleties, which proved after all only an ingenious device for velling the ugliness of the old sensuality.

Their error consisted in fancying that their mission was to make life more agreeable,—not to make it better. Beauty is *not* religion. The desire for happiness is not a praiseworthy motive. No sound structure can be built on egotism. In our mod-

ern society, which accords so large a place to women, her rôle is precisely this:—to render social life possible. Feminine tact, feminine wit, feminine grace, can work miracles. The moment the influence of woman declines, courtesy disappears, conversation degenerates,—all manner of charming things vanish. It is what we see happening before our eyes. If the manners of the day are becoming detestably rude—it is because our society,—the women included—has become too masculine. But woman has yet another, and a yet more important and indispensable rôle,—that of educator.

The Revue des Deux Mondes.

She only can form souls, imprint them with an indelible seal, sow in them the seeds of honor and purity. This is the function which she ought most jealously to guard, from the discharge of which she may expect—without loudly claiming it—the reward of well-doing. Morality is a deposit which has been placed in her hands, and true feminism consists in knowing how to keep it intact. We ask nothing better than to be allowed to kneel to woman as a priestess; but only on condition that she be consecrated to the only true religion—that of goodness and virtue.

Réné Doumic.

THE ETCHINGHAM LETTERS.

V.

From Miss Elizabeth Etchingham, 83 Hans Place, London, S.W., to Sir Richard Etchingham, Bart., Tolcarne, Much Buckland, Wessex.

Dear, dearest Richard,—Thank you very much for the vegetables, but, oh, the irony of life. The vegetables waited to come till a time when my spirit refused to feed upon Wessex beetroot or to find solace and refreshment in a Tolcarne Brussels-sprout.

I am about to issue a writ to inquire into the state of Sir Augustus Pampesford's mind. You will say that the proceeding is not premature when I tell you that since Monday my time has been fully occupied in refusing the proffered hand and heart of the honest man, who condones mental inferiority for the sake of respectable birth. And there seems no end to the business. What am I to do? I have been driven to hint that I would rather—so low are my tastes—tramp the country sell-

ing baskets, than live or die as Lady Pampesford of Pampesford-Royal; but nothing penetrates, and notes still come on the thickest, glossiest paper emblazoned with the Pampesford crest and motto (crest—a crowned peacock, motto—"I lead") in the When-you-have-duly-considered-the-matter strain. "An alliance between two ancient and honorable families," "The houses of Etchingham and Pampesford"—no, "Pampesford and Etchingham." It is more than I can cope with, and I beg and implore you to write to him yourself and tell him—tell him that I am a Katherine Shrew sort of person; that I am a certified lunatic, and only at large for the Easter vacation and to help my family settle themselves in London (the very task for a lunatic); that we are not the real Etchinghams, after all, of Tolcarne, Wessex, and Heddingley, East Anglia, with a forbear who represented his county in Edward II.'s Parliament, but mere mushrooms, who took the name and arms of the original stock.

Tell him, too, that though I accepted a copy of "The Armorial Families of the Universe," and wrote and thanked him for the book before I cut the pages (a plan I learnt from you, when doubtful as to the matter to be found therein), I did not look upon the acceptance of the volume as a preamble to marriage with the man. Tell him that I am married already; so I am—to a memory.

You see I have no one here to whom to speak of this absurd affair. Good Harry's fidelity of nature extends to his jokes, and did this subject for ridicule reach him, he would not have done with chaffing till Doomsday. Experience, in fact, teaches that the longer he has a joke about him the more valuable and serviceable it becomes. And did I confide in Laura, not only would she weep over me as I broke the news, but for days after I should see tears gathering in her eyes whenever she looked in my direction. Laura has always held tears to be the fit environment of marriage engagements, and even tidings of a Pampesford proposal would unnerve her at once.

Later.—Your letter has just come. Would it be judicious, or not, under the circumstances, to make over my baronite-lore to Sir Augustus? Were my heart as bad as my temper, I should be inclined to wish that he would take to a "Roly-Poly Cycle" himself. Doctors no longer required, only gravediggers. I never saw a man who looked to me as if he would, if he could, so thoroughly enjoy his own funeral as does Sir Augustus. I am not really brutal enough to desire his removal by death, but he is making my life a burden to me at present, and I think Jem's ingenious friend might be less usefully employed than in producing an apocryphal Book of Job for my recitation.

How these days that seem to have something of spring about them make me wish to shake the dust of London off my feet and take tickets to Much Buckland for poor, country-loving Tracy and myself. I long to see the blowing of the daffodils, the Wessex "Lent-roses," in Little Buckland meadow, and the flitting to and fro of the long-tailed tits, to whom the alders by the river serve as withdrawing-rooms. (Birds are conservative, I think, in their vocabulary.) The first breath of spring, when it reaches one in town, is depressing. It is, at least, to me, and gives me, with its suggestion of the unattainable, a doleful, Amiel-melancholy. But stay here I must, for Laura cannot be left. If you ever see in your sister any sign of this inconvenient inability, please crush it out at once. People who cannot be left, and who, therefore, must be provided with constant companionship, levy a rather hard tax upon their relations. But Laura is made so, and I do not feel it my duty to discipline her out of her faults. It is impossible to persuade her to leave home herself during the rheumatism régime. She is starved, she complains, in her friends' houses for want of proper food, poisoned by the strength of their tea, and blown out of windows by their draughts. (Other people's draughts are draughts; our own are ventilation all the world over, you may have noticed.) So here I am, and here I must remain.

Laura now breakfasts in her own room—the habit is one to be encouraged—and when letters come by the first post I am not bombarded with questions; so write, write, write, write, Richard. Do not fail me in this ridiculous Pampesford affair.

Your loving Sister,

Elizabeth.

P. S.—I have the blues. Be very amiable when you write.

VI.

Sir Richard Etchingham to Miss Elizabeth Etchingham.

My dear Elizabeth,—This is the most enormous joke: don't think me unfeeling, but read on and understand why you can afford to take Sir Augustus with levity. Have I ever seen him? I rather think not. Certainly I have not seen "The Armorial Families of the Universe," but I suspect you will find in that great work a certain vagueness about the circumstances attending the succession of the great Pampesford family in its present branch. For now I know what I know, and what you shall know in a few lines more. In short—but I think the method of all female gossips and most male pleaders, namely, to begin from the beginning in strict order of time, will be best in this case. You know old Mrs. Tallis who lives by herself at Little Buckland—at least you know about her—and how she has wanted for years to negotiate an exchange of two little odd-shaped corners of our respective properties to round off our boundaries, and how in my father's time Laura, for no reason she would assign except that she thought Mrs. Tallis' cap not suitable to her years, would not let him hear of it, whereby such slender relations as Tolcarne ever had with Fuchsia Dene were suspended; or rather all this is better known to you than to me. Now you may be guessing (with swift feminine skipping of all the intermediate diplomatic events and matters of inducement) that Mrs. Tallis has a niece with prior claims on Sir Augustus, or is even entitled by pre-contract, and prepared with all the terrors of a breach of promise action, to lead him to the altar herself; and, indeed, it would be no more than proper dramatic justice—but it is not that. A shame to keep you in suspense, you say? Pray how often

have you told me that men always spoil a story by leaving out all the beginning and letting out the end in the middle? So please attend to the real story, which is coming.

It seemed to me that Mrs. Tallis had been rather badly treated, but, as an old Political, I was afraid of starting an official correspondence without knowing the ground a little; you see the old lady might have fired off her accumulated store of temper in some form that would have made further approaches hopeless. So I betook myself to our excellent parson Follett, with whom I have now an understanding as good as an alliance in most things that concern the two Bucklands, and authorized him to convey my expressions of personal regret, and assure Mrs. Tallis that, without discussing past unpleasantness in which I had no share, and which I had no means of preventing, I should be happy to reconsider the affair in a neighborly spirit. At the date of my last letter the parson had seen Mrs. Tallis, and she said very little, so I did not mention it to you then, not knowing whether anything would come of it. However, two days later I got a very polite note, wishing me joy of being at home for good, hoping to be out and about and call at Tolcarne when weather is warmer, though the Buckland hill is hard work for a small pony carriage; finally, asking me if I will not call at Fuchsia Dene next Sunday and take a dish of tea without ceremony. Not a word of business, or boundaries, or Laura. Mrs. Tallis has not lived sixty—or is it seventy?—odd years for nothing. So that looked promising, and I went.

Mrs. Tallis was as gracious as might be, in a pretty, old-fashioned way, and gave me the best of tea—you know my weakness that way. She wanted to know all about the Indian Empire, including a second cousin once removed, who had been on railway work in

Travancore about ten years ago; whereby I had humbly to point out to her that Travancore is a good deal farther from Rajputana than Little Buckland from Thursborough, and yet we don't know everybody in Thursborough; as also, one house and one division at Eton are far enough from one another to disable Arthur from giving Mrs. Ginx full information about her nephew in the fourth form who has just come to Poole's, a house of which, as it happens, they don't think much at Lytewell's. Luckily Mrs. Tallis took no offence, and we muffled and talked on. Did you not once tell me, long ago, family history was Mrs. Tallis' strong point? Anyhow—and most luckily—it is. We came somehow to the grievances of the baronets, and I mentioned Sir Augustus Pampesford as among those who were making, in my opinion, an absurd fuss. "Pampesford, indeed!" cried Mrs. Tallis, "he is as much Pampesford as you and I are De Coucy: not that you or I, Sir Richard, have any call to want anybody else's name." And out comes the whole story, I little thinking how useful it was to be to us, but taking it in most attentively, both because it was part of my business to appear amused and because it really amused me. You shall understand, then, in brief, that Isaac Pfandersfurth of Bremen, merchant, transferred his principal seat of business to England some little time before the French Revolution, and prospered. This Isaac had a son, Solomon, who increased the paternal wealth and became acceptable, doubtless for solid reasons, to H. R. H. the Prince Regent. Now at that time the Pampesford estates were encumbered, the family on the point of extinction, and one fine day the world learnt that Solomon Pfandersfurth, Esq., had become the owner of Pampesford Hall (it was not "Royal" then). Then it was put about that a younger branch of the Pampesfords had gone

crusading against the heathen Prussians in the fourteenth century, perhaps in company with Chaucer's knight, and had left representatives in Germany whose name had been Germanized for convenience. Presently it became known that Solomon Pampesford, Esq., formerly Pfandersfurth, had, with all proper licenses, assumed the name and arms of Pampesford; and lastly, after a decent interval, his Majesty King George IV. was pleased to create Sir Solomon Pampesford, of Pampesford-Royal, a baronet of the United Kingdom. Sir Solomon, Mrs. Tallis added, perpetuated the testimony of his Englishry and orthodoxy by building a church in the most approved style of early nineteenth-century sham Gothic just outside the park gates, and becoming a strict game preserver and an indifferent shot—an example which, it is said, has been piously followed by his descendants. We have all read these things in our classical novelists, and it seems they sometimes happen.

Well, thereupon I enclose you a letter for Sir Augustus, which you may close and forward if approved, making sure that the address, of which I am a little doubtful, is quite correct. If you think it too risky I will alter it, but I suppose you are not over anxious to keep up the acquaintance. May I trust that the blues are dispersed?

As I was taking leave of Mrs. Tallis after this long talk, of which she had done most, I asked her in a by-the-way manner if she remembered that odd three-cornered piece of our east hams that runs into her land, and said it had occurred to me in walking round that it might be for our mutual convenience to have a little adjustment of boundaries on that side. Mrs. Tallis answered that she had talked enough for one afternoon, and had no wits left for business, but she would be pleased to think it over and let me know. Then she caught sight of Margaret on her bicy-

cle, who had been round on errands and came back to convoy me. We had meant Mrs. Tallis not to see it the first time; in fact, Margaret was quite sure it would be shocking to her. But she was only pleased and amused, and we rode off with a blessing waved after us from the porch. If you have any interest left for my small affairs, know that I had actually ridden, with exceeding caution, down the Little Buckland hill. Margaret says I begin to do her credit. Jem may be here any day now, and will perhaps condescend to put some touches to our education. There is a shade of something amiss about Margaret these last days; she looks worried at times, and I don't think it is the housekeeping or anxiety for her or my improvement in cycling. No doubt she will tell me in good time if it is really anything.

The Folletts are expecting one Shipley, a very learned mediævalist from the Record Office, to spend a few days at the Vicarage, and examine some documents in the neighborhood, or in the Thursborough archives, I am not sure which. They have hardly met Mr. Shipley, though Mr. Follett knows his work well. Margaret and I are to help to entertain him. We are all rather in fear of the learned man, and try to comfort one another with the hope that he may not turn out altogether too weighty, or otherwise very formidable.

Your affectionate Brother,
Richard Etchingam.

[Enclosure in No. VI.]

Sir Richard Etchingam to Sir Augustus Pampesford.

Dear Sir Augustus Pampesford,—My sister has communicated to me, as head of the family, the substance of the very flattering proposal you have been pleased to make to her, as well as of her own views already expressed to you. She is, as I need not point out,

fully competent in age and otherwise to form her own judgment, and I must add, having known her from childhood, that nothing I could say would be likely to affect her judgment in such a matter. It is not for me to indulge my own feelings by confirming your estimate of her qualities, and still less to cast doubt on your discernment by pretending to dispute it. However, as your ancestor, Sir Solomon, the first baronet, is reported to have said to some one who presumed to censure his full and final adoption of English customs, shekels are silver, but sovereigns are golden. I cannot bring myself to think that it will be long before your golden talents and advantages find in some other quarter metal as attractive and more congenial.

Believe me, dear Sir Augustus,
Yours very faithfully,

Richard Etchingam.
Sir Augustus Pampesford, Bart., &c.,
Pampesford-Royal.

VII.

From Miss Elizabeth Etchingam to Sir Richard Etchingam.

Dear, Dearest Dickory,—Why are not postmen who drop letters into wrong letter-boxes decapitated on the spot, to prevent like wrongdoing in future? Why if postmen drop letters into wrong letter-boxes, is it always the wrong letters that are thus consigned? Why was it not the black-edged appeal from a clergyman for funds to repair a north-country church, of which I had never heard, or the splendidly gilded and blazoned offer from a money-lender to Harry of the mines of Golconda, or the bill for Laura's Sunday bonnet, or the invitation to Cynthia to dance at Vivian-End in Easter week, that the folly of the postman delayed in transmission, rather than your Pampesford epistle? I will tell you—because man, and woman also, is born to trouble as

the sparks fly upward, and because desperately wicked is the heart of postmen.

You see, thanks to this postman folly and wickedness, I never had the letter, which should have come at breakfast time, till the moment when Turnbull brought it into the drawing-room ostentatiously laid upon the tea-tray and all unsheltered from Laura's eyes. Never trust shortsighted eyes not to see, nor deaf ears not to hear. Blind eyes and deaf ears are freakish things, and will play you false if you put your trust in them. Laura saw in a moment from whom the document stamped with the Tolcarne postmark came, and before I could forge a reason for letting it lie unopened, Turnbull ushered in no other than Sir Augustus himself. Really Laura's policy of the open door has much to answer for. (As is known to you, we are never allowed the protection of a "Not at home," unless we are down with an infectious disease, in bed, or in the street, but sit at the receipt of custom the day through, at the mercy of all the unemployed in Christendom.) To fill up the cup of my woes, our stepmother frustrated my attempts to leave the room, and, alas, I can't take flight through these French windows into the harbor of the shrubbery as, in such a predicament, would have been my course at Tolcarne. "Pour out the tea, dear Elizabeth," was my order; "if it stands too long the tannin will ruin our digestions." Better be tanned to shoe leather, I thought, than retain one's digestion in Sir Augustus' company; but this reflection I had to keep to myself. "And now let us hear the Tolcarne news," Laura persisted; "I am sure Sir Augustus will forgive my impatience when he knows that it is a fortnight since we heard a word from our old home." (I have, you will observe, treated your communications as private.) Alas, alack, from first to last the luck was against me, for, when

forced to open the letter I proceeded to break the seal, up leapt Trelawney with a robust purr to my knee and, jerking my elbow as he leapt, jerked out the enclosure, address upwards, to Sir Augustus' feet. Alack, alas, the envelope I saw was open and probably meant for my perusal before delivery. Means of escape, however, if not of victory, were at hand, and sweeter than the song of nightingale was the sound at that moment of Harry's hoarse shout of "Elizabeth!" echoing through the house. And never was man's call more quickly responded to.

Harry, poor fellow, has a cold in his head, and, in passing, I may mention that far less to-do would he make were a gun-shot wound his complaint. "I could not go to the drawing-room after you," he explained, "as Turnbull told me that ass, Pampesford, is there again; and I want to know if the time hasn't come round to inhale this beastly eucalyptus stuff." So your letter was read whilst the bath-towel that enveloped brother and inhalation shrouded Harry's proud head: and read to the accompaniment of the sufferer's sighs and piteous appeals to be told if "it isn't long enough." And yet Harry, without a qualm, would have stormed Dargai's heights, and anything else really formidable that you like.

As to the Pampesford antecedents, I am not surprised by what you tell me. The glitter points to an origin of the sort. I do wonder what the enclosed missive said. It is pretty sure to be effectual, for you are rightly held to be an effectual person, Sir.

Later.—And what do you think? When—Sir Augustus safely out of the house—I went back to the drawing-room, there I found Laura bathed in tears and declaring herself to be most deeply hurt by our secrecy, our duplicity, our all things imaginable that are bad, in concealing from her matters that concerned our very heart's blood.

Sir Augustus had evidently let her know that he had spent his time during the last fortnight in offering what I have not the sense to accept. I fear that poor Laura's feelings are really injured, and, of course, *à la mode* of Laura, she turns her injuries into an instance of disrespect to our father's memory, who put her "in the place of his wife." Her sympathies, I need not tell you, are entirely with Sir Augustus, who is, she says, "a very good-hearted man." I dare say he is good-hearted, but it is useless to argue with her that the absence of brutality in his nature does not establish his right to marry any unwilling woman he may fix upon as a desirable wife.

Thursday.—Laura still wears a stone-wall face, and treats me with a sort of offended-governess air, as if I were a child in disgrace. "I am not in your confidence, Elizabeth, and therefore am not surprised to see you wearing your gray gown instead of your black, or buying new shoe-laces without consulting me." As an olive branch, I have written to beg Mrs. Carstairs to come to tea this afternoon, and I shall retire to my room early in the entertainment, so as to give the aggrieved one a good opportunity of complaining of me. What more to please can woman do?

Harry's cold, I am happy to tell you, is better, and he is not to die of it. It is an acknowledged thing, indeed, that his sneezes will not land him this time in Hades, and he talks of going north for a week at Easter, a-fishing. The Vivians have invited Cynthia, also Stephen, to stay with them at Vivian-End for a hunt ball next week. Vivian-End, you know, is Mr. Biggleswade's cure, and I am thinking of packing up Trelawney with Cynthia's dancing frock as Biggleswade defence. I must not again forget what I have intended to tell you before, which is that Stephen would very much like an invitation to Tolcarne. He is writing

the life of some west-country mariner for the "Naval Notabilities" series, and thinks that you or Mr. Follett can afford him some valuable information on Wessex sailor-lore. Mrs. Vivian affronted him by inquiring if Noah was to be included in the "Naval Notabilities" series.

It is not for the first time that Jim's expected arrival has given Margaret a worried look, but if there is anything to be told to you she will tell it herself.

I think I know the Folletts' expected guest, Mr. Shipley. Is he not brother to my dear Alice Newton? I think so. The Newtons have taken a house in Sloane Street for three months, and I shall see something of her, I hope. Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Ware, came to see us the other day, a woman devoid of understanding, who thinks it is time that Alice, whose child died a year ago, "roused herself." Prolonged grief bores the onlookers. We are all allowed to be unhappy for a little while, you know, but then we have to "begin to get over it." Poor Alice, I think she found in her child consolation for her marriage. (It was Mrs. Ware who, in Indian days, finding that some one she considered a black sheep was not tabooed by Bombay, pleased Harry by her inquiry, "What is the use of being respectable if such people are to be asked to Government House?")

Don't forget that it is "expected of you" to invite Charles and Minnie in the course of time to Tolcarne. I am really sorry for Minnie, *à propos* of the treatment she receives from her mother in the matter of "Only a Woman's Heart;" and I feel that we must all be very good-natured about it, and make the most of our liking—or, rather, the least of our disliking—of the book, to make up. When I went to see Mrs. Vivian the other day, I was followed into the house by Minnie, who came in quite excited and breathless over a most polite newspaper notice of the

novel. "My dear Minnie, these ridiculous reviews are either written by people who have not read the book or who know me," was Mrs. Vivian's comment. "And now I come to think of it, Hugo Ennismore writes in the 'Minerva,' and there is nothing foolish that he would not say or do to please me," etc., etc. This was hard on Minnie, and she was all tears and tremors in a moment. Blanche, the pretty younger sister, is much happier in her relations with her mother. She laughs when attacked, and Mrs. Vivian receives the laughter as a tribute to her humor, and is appeased. From Mrs. Vivian, on the same occasion, I got the latest intelligence in printers' blunders. The printer of a report of some philanthropic work in which she is interested turned *L'Union Internationale des Amies de la Jeune Fille* into *L'Union Internationale des Arries de la Jeune Fille*. What do you think of that?

Whilst Laura was confessing my sins to Mrs. Carstairs this afternoon, I read some chapters of Earle's "Microcosmography"—the new reprint. Perhaps I am right, perhaps I am wrong; but, wrong or right, I prefer the portrait gallery of Theophrastus to that of Earle, and that of old Fuller in his "Holy and Profane State" to either. For your guidance, as an elder brother, I might make over to you an extract from the character of "The Elder Brother" in "The Holy State."

"He relieveth his distressed kinred, yet so, as he continues them in their calling. Otherwise, they will all make his house their hospitall, his kinred their calling. When one being as Husbandman challenged kinred of Robert Grosthead Bishop of Lincoln and thereupon requested favor of him to bestow an office on him, 'Cousen' (quoth the Bishop), 'if your cart be broken I'll mend it; if your plough be old, I'll give you a new one, and seed to sow your land, but an Husbandman I found you

and an Husbandman I'll leave you.' It is better to ease poor kinred in their Profession than to ease them from their Profession." Very, very true.

Wars, and rumors of wars; what will come of it all? I pity those who sit in kings' and presidents' and prime ministers' places—

One would have lingering wars with little cost;

Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings;

A third man thinks, without expense at all,

By guileful fair words peace may be obtained.

So it was, so it is, and so, I suppose, it will always be.

Do not dock me, when you write of the Tolcarne news, of the Tolcarne sayings and doings. They throw up the window and freshen the air of the room (Ventilation, not draught). Is Enticknap, as usual, grudging growing-room to everything but a cabbage, and hungering—I trust futilely—to dig the borders? Don't let him. If he had his way he would destroy every vestige of blossoming vegetation. The good creature confuses a Sahara and a flower-garden, and all that he does not cut down, he holds it his privilege to dig up. I wonder if Merlin, poor old dog, still, every fine morning, takes a sun-bath on the terrace? I liked to see him throw himself down before the big myrtle with a sigh of reposeful content. And tell me if the cocks and hens flourish and if you now are called upon to find names for the infants of the poultry-yard. Great was Enticknap's embarrassment last year when Margaret gave her own name and Cynthia's to two of the chickens. With "Miss Cynthia the cock" and "Miss Margrot the pullet," he finally solved the etiquette difficulty.

My *salutations emprescées* to you and

to everything at Tolcarne, and those of Trelawney to the birds—robin, linnet, thrush. Much does he wish, horrid fellow, that it were for him to devastate the nests this spring. Good-bye, good-bye.

Your affectionate Sister,
Elizabeth.

VIII.

Sir Richard Etchingham to Miss Elizabeth Etchingham.

My dear Elizabeth.—Laura may go to Dúzakh, which is in the Persian the opposite of Bhisht; and if you don't know what those two places are, you may guess. Seriously, can you go on living with her much longer? There is a point where self-respect, after a fair trial, sets limits to every social duty. However, Sir Augustus' exit is assured, and I shall not break my heart because it was a little more abrupt than we meant.

For once your penetration was at fault about Margaret. Her little worry had nothing to do with Jem; we have had a refusal here, too, but of a very different person. Mr. Weekes, the curate, who began his relations to me with a rather exaggerated version of the civility due from a younger man to a considerably older one, has become more and more obsequious the last week or two, till at last it was positively oppressive. Margaret, regarding him as an inoffensive person to whom it would be a sin to refuse charity, continued to instruct him in cycling along with me. Last Thursday morning he came round when I happened to be well occupied with letters and Enticknap (I do remember that Friday is outward mail day, for the sake of keeping up with some old colleagues), and I said that if Mr. Weekes and Margaret would start on our usual run—the one approximately flat piece of the

Thursborough road near us which you once complained of as our one dull walk—I would come after them presently and overtake or meet them. "Huzar," said Margaret (she will call me Huzar, though I have explained to her that it is quite pointless), "can't you really come with us?" But I really could not very well, and saw no need for it. In about half an hour I stepped out to fetch my hired machine from the portion of the stable which Margaret has converted into a cycle-house, when Margaret came riding in at the gate, faster than usual, and almost ran against me, with Mr. Weekes panting and wobbling after her. They dismounted and took their bicycles in (Mr. Weekes' lives here till he can find storage elsewhere—there is no place at all in his lodgings in the village, and as his and mine were hired from the same shop in Thursborough at the same time it seemed the natural thing), and as I was moving in the same direction there came out in Margaret's most practical housekeeper's voice—the one she uses when something stupid aggravates her—"Do stop talking that nonsense, Mr. Weekes, and don't upset my machine." Then a limp black figure, dusty as to the knees, came scrambling past me with a hasty salute most unlike Mr. Weekes' usual ceremony, and when he was well out of the gate Margaret emerged, and half drew, half drove me into the study. "What," said I, "you don't mean to tell me he has—?" She looked as if she did not quite know whether to laugh or cry; you know I become imbecile when people cry; but happily the laugh turned the scale, and, after giving a little choke or two, she collapsed on a stool in a violent fit of laughter. "Yes, indeed," she said, when she could find words, "and he's been proposing all the time." Apparently Mr. Weekes accepted the chance as a providential omen, and as soon as they were fairly

started he began to blurt out incoherent compliments, in which the virtues of Margaret, Much Buckland, and myself were hopelessly tangled, and then reeled off what he intended to be a proposal in due form, with a full exposition of the secular and spiritual advantages that would accrue to both parties and to the people of the Bucklands, from Margaret becoming Mrs. Septimus Weekes. As he is barely capable of riding and talking at the same time, his discourse was adorned by narrowly averted collisions with the Squares' family coach, a farmer's cart, a donkey, a wheelbarrow, and Margaret herself. All these events gave Margaret plenty to do in looking out for herself and ejaculating imperative cautions, so she could only get out a few words of dissent. When he followed her into the stable, he essayed to go down on one knee, but the space being limited, he only achieved stumbling over Margaret's machine and barking his shin against the mud-guard. Net result—Mr. Weekes must find quarters for his bicycle somewhere else without loss of time. By good luck, there was Jem's coming—now come, in fact—and I wrote a little note explaining to poor Septimus that Jem was very particular about having plenty of room. So there is another exit, and I have escaped, I trust, a solemn letter or a solemn interview, or both. And Margaret, I think, now feels more intimate with her half-known parent from the Indies. She had been suspecting the catastrophe for some days, but looked, as I should have looked, for something much more formal and dignified. She is not exactly angry with the man, but vexed at his folly. Such persons do seem a blot on the reasonableness of things.

Now, concerning the arrival of Jem and Mr. Shipley, which also has had unexpected elements. Arthur's movements are known to you, as he did his

duty by calling on you before he came on here for the holidays, and you have verified for yourself his healthy state of indifference to the problems of the universe. I don't think he will turn out the sort of young man who considers that his own opinions must be of serious importance to God Almighty. Well, Jem telegraphed to us on Tuesday to expect him by the Thursborough road, and the three of us set off wheeling after lunch, on the chance of a meeting. About four miles out we perceived, as the old-fashioned first chapter used to say, two riders approaching at a swift and steady pace from the cathedral town. Meanwhile, we had been discussing the unknown Mr. Shipley. My guess was a dry, precise little man. Margaret's was a tall, thin, anemic man, with a stoop and blinking eyes. "Oh! no," said Arthur, "that's not the sort. I know those awfully clever history chaps; we had one to give a lecture to the School Society this half. He was red and smooth and just like a Rugby football, and looked as if he couldn't stand up by himself. He talked of nothing but common fields and grass-farming and mangold-wurzels; that's what they make us learn for history now." "Look," said Margaret, "Isn't that Jem?" "Somebody with him, then," said Arthur. A few minutes showed that it certainly was Jem, and with him a proper enough man of no remarkable dimensions any way in excess or defect, and of decidedly cheerful aspect, old enough to wear a full beard in defiance of the modern fashion of youth—that is, enormously old to Arthur's eyes, and in the novelist's "prime of life" to mine. "Let me introduce Mr. Shipley," said Jem; "we met at Oxbridge some time since, and we have fallen in on the road." Not a bit like any of our guesses. Things very seldom are, so far as I know, and people never. So

we rode back to the Vicarage quite an imposing procession, and if Jem thought the pace funereal, he did not say so.

To the Vicarage, because Mr. Shipley did not know the way; and Mr. Follett, who was walking in the garden, had us all to tea. We took the back way by reason of our machines, and thereby were surprised. For who should be sitting with Mrs. Follett but poor Weekes! She is a motherly, comfortable person (all the more so to the world from having no children of her own), and he doubtless had come for consolation. Margaret made herself a rampart of Jem and me. Mrs. Follett asked if there was any more talk of war in London, but Jem, not having been in London for some days, disclaimed knowledge, and Mr. Shipley said there was nothing certain. "Is it not shocking, Mrs. Follett," said Mr. Weekes, "that war should still be possible? My friend Dr. Woggles, of the Universal Arbitration League, writes to me in a truly painful state of anxiety." "I am not sure that the Vicar agrees with you," said Mrs. Follett. "But on all Christian principles—" he replied, and, catching sight of Margaret, gaped and came to a dead stop. "But," said Mr. Follett, who of course, knew nothing of our late episode, "a clerk in orders is hardly free to deny that Christian men may sometimes lawfully bear arms. Dr. Woggles is probably not bound by the Articles. And there are some other archaic writings which we are bound at least not to dismiss without consideration. Sir Richard, will you kindly take down that Vulgate which is just behind your head on the shelf? Thank you. And you, Miss Margaret, will you read this verse? You learnt Latin at your High School, doubtless with the true Italian vowels—one thing, at least, that girls are taught better than boys." "Please, Mr. Vicar, I don't know Latin," said

Margaret. "Enough to read a text in the Vulgate," said Mr. Follett, "and our barbarous English Latin is not what the Vulgate deserves." "A good judgment," said Mr. Shipley. "It will save you talking," I whispered to Margaret. So she took the book from the Vicar, and with a ring in her voice quite different from the housekeeper tone, and (it seemed to my ears, which have heard a good few tongues between Gibraltar and Bombay) a mighty pretty Italian accent, she read out:—

"Accingere gladio tuo super femur tuum, potentissime. Specie tua et pulchritudine tua intende, prospere procede et regna, propter veritatem et mansuetudinem et iustitiam: et deducet te mirabiliter dextera tua."

"I suppose," said Mr. Shipley, "those last words are wrongly translated, but in themselves I like them better than the 'terrible things' of the English version." "That was why I chose the Latin," said Mr. Follett. Mr. Weekes had vanished. "Well," said I, not having attended much to Western public affairs for some years, and having no clear or decided notions about the Cuban question, "and who is your mighty man that is to gird himself with his sword upon his thigh?" "The President of the United States," said Mr. Follett. "*Et deducat ipsum mirabiliter dextera sua,*" added Mr. Shipley. "He's all right," said Jem.

So there you have incidentally the answer to your question about rumors of war. We are to dine at the Vicarage to-morrow. Merlin, who, you remember, came from Jem's old home, is quite spry at seeing him again. Arthur, who patronizes us all except Jem in cycling, took out the family and Mr. Shipley for a ride to-day, and on the return was cautioning us about the incline down to the house, when the learned man, remarking that the slight breeze against us was an excellent substitute for the brake, put up his

feet, and, drawing ahead of Arthur by the advantage of a man's weight over a boy's, salled in neatly through the one open leaf of the gate, with just enough way on to dismount easily. Whereupon Arthur has confided to Margaret and me that he considers Shipley an old brick, and doesn't believe he can be an historian at all.

I am asking Charles and Minnie to come here for the short Whitsuntide vacation. You have never told me your opinion about the binding of Tod's Rajasthan—and lots of other things. I must contrive to see you soon, though they have given me an infinite deal of

nothing to do as chairman of the Parish Council, and Wessex farmers are less manageable than Rajput princes, and trains at Buckland Road station are few and evil. The only fast thing one sees there is the Midland express running through to the north, which is obviously not of much use to a man who wants to go to London. It is said that it once slipped a coach for a director, which made a nine days wonder for all Buckland folk. Think of a time to suit you, and I will make it out somehow. No more at present from

Your loving Brother,
Richard Etchingham.

Cornhill Magazine.

(*To be continued.*)

TO MORFYDD DEAD.

Morfydd at midnight
Met the Nameless Ones;
Now she wanders on the winds,
White and lone.
I would give the light
Of eternal suns,
To be with her on the winds,
No more lone!

Oh, wild sea of air!
Oh, night's vast sweet noon!
We would wander through the night,
Star and star.
Nay! but she, most fair!
Sun to me and moon;
I the vassal of her flight,
Far and far.

Morfydd at midnight
Met the Nameless Ones:
Now she wanders on the winds,
White and lone.
Take from me the light,
God! of all thy suns;
Give me her, who on the winds
Wanders lone!

Lionel Johnson.

THE DRAMA OF IDEAS.

Among our most encouraging plays to-day are those in which there is little reflection, and among the most obstructive are those which endeavor to produce works of art on the principles of science. What now represents our intellectual drama is loaded with the seriousness which marks an incomplete understanding, leading to an emphasis of analytic thought at the expense of beautiful forms. An attempt to distinguish sharply meaning from expression leads, for instance, to contrasts between Shakespeare's brilliant rhetoric and his commonplace conceptions. Of the three most notable dramatic critics in England one puts Shakespeare just above Ibsen, one places him infinitely below the Norwegian, and the third and least laborious wobbles unsteadily from this atmosphere to a place from which beauty and truth are seen as one. Contemporary dramatists are naturally treated to a similar if less vehement confusion. "The Princess and the Butterfly" is patronized where "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" is admired, because the earlier play can be expounded more readily in the form of a plus b raised to the second power. It has more of that meaning which the mathematician missed in "Paradise Lost." "Tess o' the D'Urbevilles" had to be dramatized because it was so significant, while so much higher a piece of art as "Far from the Madding Crowd," whatever its relation to an earlier Pinero play, is half forgot. Yet, although Mr. Pinero and Mr. Hardy are treated most respectfully when their tone is most serious, their touch is delicate only when it verges on comedy. If we applied to them not philosophic but artistic standards, the relative reputations of their principal works would be reversed.

In "Tess," as in much of Ibsen, the serious effects are studied and tricky, things go wrong by complicated accident, there is none of the exhilaration of tragedy through a freeing of the imagination. In the same play the rustic scenes, where comedy predominates, are large and easy, with a consistency of character that gives them unity. Mr. Pinero, also, in his solemn dramas plays on the nerves rather than on the imagination, which he often reaches with his lighter touch. Whatever he has got from Ibsen has not improved his native English talent. "The Princess and the Butterfly," like some of his earlier comedies, is laid out, with all its imperfections, in a broad and roomy spirit, and needs only the excision of a few speeches of wooden sentiment to make it a high comedy. If the author is ceasing to mistake problematic dullness for depth, as his last two plays hint, he is likely to leave us more charming works than he has yet written, because the ideas of Pinero the artist are worth so much more than the syllogisms of Pinero the moralist. In philosophy and science it may be possible to separate success of thought from exhilaration and joy, but in art it is not. No literature, and least of all the drama, has any higher aim than the production of imaginative delight.

"My lord," exclaims Fay Juliani, "he bored me till I felt my scalp quivering. Do you know dat feeling?" That emotion is not an artistic one. "Perhaps," says the Princess in the same play, "it is to the advantage of a clever man's seriousness that it should be lighted up occasionally, just to show what it is composed of."

A dramatist's seriousness must always be lighted up enough to show, not only what it is composed of, but the in-

spiration and human value of its parts. The neglect of the dress of beauty is what makes Ibsen's later plays rather technical experiments, instructive to playwrights, than forms precious to humanity. No spider's arguments against sweetness and light will enable us to produce art without it. Ibsen is a great playwright, because he is still in some degree a poet, and because he is always a distinguished workman; but what success he has is in spite of his infatuation with sociology and heredity, which tend to dim that bare but vivid imagination which gleams even through his restricting tensivity. In his later plays the philosophic are far below the technical ideas—the manner in which the action is carried forward with relentless quietness and unhesitating power, with few incidents, the early acts developing from within, marching onward as if with the strength of the conception, and falling apart to show the corrupting thesis only toward the end. The end is what shows most fatally whether the playwright has builded on the sand of theory or the rock of imagination. Ibsen sees the situation, he sees part of the characters, in exposition he shows rare talent, but as he has no great fables to tell, he breaks down in the last act and substitutes mystery, with a compulsory pistol-shot, or fall from a tower, for large clearness and the broad end of a big story.

Nothing shows better than endings the difference between ideas which lie inside of art and those which cannot be amalgamated with it. Lessing long ago complained of plays which end like an epigram. Ibsen's do that, because the conceptions which he is expounding are syllogisms. They hold us down to the point, contracting our feelings, instead of expanding them, and any large view of life expands them, whether it be tragedy or comedy. One of the greatest wrongs done to

Shakespeare to-day is in the excision of the endings. When Hamlet dies the curtain falls, implying no interest in the total meaning of the play, and when Romeo and Juliet are dead the large conclusion of the story is an impertinence. In the case of Shakespeare and other poetic dramatists this mutilation is due to the vanity of actors and the mediocrity of audiences, but your concocter of intellectual dramas snaps off his story, with no need of help from the manager, because it is one line of thought, narrowly followed out, not a picture needing to be completed with the majestic strokes with which it was begun.

Another inartistic idea, which prides itself on being modern, is lowering the dignity of the protagonist. Hedda Gabler, a nervous egotist, who mistakes her sensitiveness for superiority, and pines for a life in which men get drunk and shoot themselves through the temple instead of through the abdomen, is apt for comedy; but Ibsen has placed her in the centre of a sober drama, and, by a law which will exist as long after his death as it existed before his birth, his play would be ruined by this error alone. It is possible, though by no means certain, that the thought which was wasted in the creation of Hedda might have adorned a neurologist or surgeon, just as it is conceivable, but still less probable, that economic genius lurks in the mind which conceived "Widowers' Houses" and "Mrs. Warren's Profession." The law that a tragedy cannot exist unless the author glorifies life, unless he puts magnified characters in ideal situations, working out exceptional plots, was created, not by Aristotle, but by the nature of the human mind; and a law which has stood the test of time, from Sophocles to Shakespeare, and from Racine to Goethe, will not yield to theories of novelty. If the contemporary drama neglects it, the

law remains, and the drama is condemned.

Intellectual realism, which denies the tested laws, is farther from truth than the veriest melodrama. Zola's manifestoes stand fairly enough for the notions of his tribe. He is talking of "Macbeth":—

This is indifferent to me, because it happens too far from me, in the clouds. And the interpretation baffles me still more. I write that it is sublime, but I remain cold. Perhaps a sense is lacking to me. I was mortally bored at "Macbeth," and left with no distinct opinion of Salvini. In "La Mort Civile" Salvini transported me. I went away choking with emotion. To be sure, the author of the last drama, M. Giacometti, should not hope to equal Shakespeare. His work, at bottom, is even mediocre, in spite of the charming bareness of his formula. But it is of my time, it moves in the air I breathe, it touches me like the story of a neighbor. I prefer life to art, as I have often said. A great work frozen by centuries is in truth no more than a beautiful corpse.

Does not all that sound to us to-day like the talk of a sophomore? More hopeful than this are the gods in the gallery, who are open to greatness, however open they also are to vulgarity. Although the public is a monster, the voice of the people is the voice of God, and the gallery will protect us from mystery, surgery, and problems.

We need not flatter the intelligence of this protecting *vox populi*. When we think of the subtleties of the pseudo-intellectual drama, unintelligible and valueless to the unsophisticated imagination, we hail the public as a friend, but when we dwell with the uncouth object which the manager means when he snarls, "That's what the public wants, and you will find a hard job if you try to elevate it," our refuge is withdrawn. The people are loyal to some of the deepest rules of art, because those principles were founded on

a knowledge of human nature, but although they maintain the rights of flesh and blood, their blood and their flesh are as coarse as they are vigorous. To take an illustration from another art: Some old soldiers objected to a monument in which war was represented by Pallas. What had that dead Greek woman to do with the battlefield? An artist replied that they would be satisfied by a group in which one soldier cut off the head of another with his sabre, especially "red paint on the marble recalled blood. The desire for art of the present was healthy, but the expression which they would choose would be the coarsest. In the drama their taste is similar. You can't swing the crowd off after Maeterlinck, and you can count on the gallery for enthusiasm over Shakespeare; but, on the other hand, it is with his situations, his theatrical element, that Shakespeare holds them, not with his subtler beauty, and they applaud loudest the interpolations of Garrick and Cibber. They like a good, honest, human Phyllis better than Mr. Gilbert or Mr. Pinero. The names of the most popular plays of to-day are hardly known to those of us who read. They all deal with love and intrigue, villains, heroes, and the supremacy of virtue, and the language in them is stilted and loud. Not everything which the public likes is good art, but nothing which the public dislikes is great art. Successful art must deal with important material, and it must mould it into beautiful forms. The public is the great judge of the material only, and a poor judge of the form. If your subject-matter, your theme, your sentiment, your ethics, do not please the crowd, you are slight. If they do, you may succeed for the day; but to succeed for the centuries this common human material must have delicacies and harmonies of form which can be appreciated by few. The tendency of some of the most intellect-

ual dramatists of to-day is to refuse large human demands to the crowd and harmonies to the sensitive, asking all to be content with a little psychology.

These plays are weakest intellectually where they are weakest dramatically. Mr. Shaw made a fuss because the American public didn't like that scene in "The Devil's Disciple" where a minister becomes a soldier in about four seconds, rushes around the room making speeches, but lacks time to kiss his wife or say anything that would expose the plot. The public talks in terms of morals and metaphysics, but behind its words is usually a perception of technical or imaginative weakness. Mr. Shaw didn't know how to make a good story or an efficient character. "Arms and the Man" would have succeeded had it possessed dramatic consistency and completeness. The public liked "The Little Minister," and there is more technical skill in it than in the whole work of many playwrights who pretend to a place just ahead of the age. There is no superfluous word, scene, or movement, no excrescence and no self-consciousness, but a steady movement carries the story directly, with a delicate, artificial and yet human touch, through devices as fresh as they are moderate. The comedy line just this side of farce is followed with an unerring skill which makes the play—cheerful, easy and distinct—as charming to the simple as it is to the shrewd. Mr. Barrie has the ripe ideas of an artist, not the half-baked material of speculation.

Mr. Barrie has enjoyed the happiness of being allowed to write comedy without having unlimited meaning instilled into it, but Mr. Pinero has not been so fortunate. Although the moods of "The Princess and the Butterfly," its liberal structure and subdued humor, are its merits, everybody discussed the pros and cons of unseasonable marriage, and a comedy of the intelligence was turned into tragedy, sentiment,

and sermons, by lovers of melancholy philosophy. Volumes of Teutonic gravity have been written about the inner meaning of Falstaff, and at least one individual did, in his earlier days, find an almost tragic significance in that song in "Patience" which recounts how a magnet, wooed by all the nails and files in the shop, was unable to attract the only thing it loved, a silver churn. Because Gilbert's wit cut into life, the aforesaid victim then thought it ought to be explained in essays as serious as life. It really seemed unworthy of it to call it wit, lest somebody forget that wit deals with realities. "Much Ado about Nothing," too,—what tremendous comment lurks just beneath the surface, what human importance, what a philosophy! How does "Le Gendre de M. Poirier" suggest treatises on social conditions! When Yvette Guilbert went to Germany last spring the Teutons found morals in her songs, and even a Frenchman, writing of her, said: "I find our Yvette a moralist. I breathe in her songs the healthy, bitter odor of the forests, bitter as the suffering of life, healthy as pity for all the conquered."

Alack-a-day, Yvette knew her business, but the weakness she sported with is in the deadliest earnest. That it can be traced far into the past may be suggested by the title of a play (quoted by Faguet) by Pierre Matthieu, in the sixteenth century:—

Vashi, tragédie . . . ou l'on verra les tristes effets de l'orgueil et désobéissance, la louange d'une monarchie bien ordonnée, l'office d'un bon prince pour heureusement commander sa puissance, son ornement, son exercice éloigné du luxe et dissolution, et la belle harmonie d'un mariage bien accordé.

However old this spirit may be, its most influential modern appearance was in the fertile brain of Denis Diderot, who not only dramatized his sermons, but loudly proclaimed his belief

that plays were the best medium for instilling philosophic truth into the multitude, and even for the Government to prepare the public for changes in the law, an idea now dwelling in the mind of William of Germany. A better dramatist has said that art teaches all in aiming to teach none, and he might have added that it teaches much only when it aims to teach nothing—when it aims at the emotions, the passions, and the imagination, and not at the logical reason or the sense of scientific fact. It was this same dramatist who made M. Poirier admire the picture of a dog sitting on a sea beach, baying across the nightly billows. The dog comes nearer to the grand style and the universal than does the *tranche de la vie*. Virtue harassed and triumphant, incidents galore, and villains persistent and routed, are nearer the heart of drama than in an intellectual study where there is no virtue and no villain, no incidents and no exaggerations, nothing but a plea that we be interested in apothecaries or the subtleties of domestic discord. Melodrama is poetry in the rough, and the realism preached by Diderot and practised at intervals since his day, is the antithesis of poetry in any state. If the crowd could get great art it would take it, but, as it is, it takes the next best, which is not syllogistic plays but melodrama, in which there is a human appeal, not only to the general, but to the civilized man also. The kinship between intellectual innocence and real culture is what makes bad melodramas so good and good melodramas so bad. Usually the man who enjoys Pinero or Barrie thoroughly is the man who rejoices in a howling picture of love and hate and hairbreadth 'scapes, with virtue and sentiment glorified in the end. The civilized man enjoys the primitive instincts of mankind and dislikes the pretenses of half-education. The ragged man and woman who throb over the

wild eyes and dishevelled hair of the heroine are his brother and sister. He feels as they do, a thrill in his inmost being when the curtain falls on the first "I love you." He feels nothing at all to correspond with the tastes of the class just above these things—the middle-class, which knows enough to laugh at "A Bowery Girl," but buys literature for the chromos which go with it, and goes to the theatre to see cartloads of scenery and acres of heather, and real horses. This is the class on whose integrity and stability modern civilization rests, but its taste in art is worse than the taste of those above it or of those below it. To this class, also, the manager who wishes to give the people what they want must look, for they have as much money as the cultivated, and are almost as numerous as the poor.

Mr. William Gillette once said that the only critic whose opinion he respected was the average spectator, who is, unfortunately, unable to express his opinion. In keeping the appeal to fundamental interests, which the melodrama has, and substituting good workmanship for bad, the author of "Secret Service" has made the best play recently produced in the United States. The well-made piece, as it is represented by Sardou, is a spectacle even more melancholy than the problem play. It differs from the proper melodrama in making merely a nervous excitement, instead of playing on the varied emotional sources of laughter, sympathy, and tears. The theatrical side is a vital part of every great drama, but the theatrical side itself in Sardou is depraved. Although Shakespeare and Molière live through the centuries because they are literature, they hold the stage because they are theatrical. Although they are full of intricate charms that can best be felt in the closet, their appeal to the eye is equally strong. Their scenes and situations are

almost as far above Sardou as their language and psychology. Just as the callow intellectual dramatist tries to push into conspicuousness his fragment of the life that should go into a play, so the disciple of the "well-made play" fathered by Scribe tries to do everything with his one fraction of stage workmanship. All the elements combine in the great dramatists, and all that is done by the playwrights who make a specialty of one aspect is to give extreme emphasis to the only thing they have among the many things which hold their place in the proper high or low relief in more opulent dramatists. The psychological playwright has taken off one end, the dramatic mechanic another. There is more stagecraft in Sardou than there is in Molière, only in the sense that there are more ideas in Ibsen than there are in Shakespeare; that in the smaller men the thing they have is more emphatic than it could be if it did not stand alone. Intelligently speaking, the whole theatre of Sardou is as much below "Hamlet" in stagecraft as all of Ibsen is below it in intellectual content.

We are probably farther from a revival of tragedy than from either comedy or what Victor Hugo called the "grotesque." It was a sadly demoralized man who said he had three rules for the conduct of life; of which the first was, never to see the plays of Henry Arthur Jones, and the other two did not matter. The bourgeois dramas, loaded with easy sentiment, are as far from health in one direction as those of the perpetrator of the jest, the author of "A Woman of No Importance" and "Lady Windermere's Fan," are in the other. Between them lies the solidest drama produced in England to-day, by artists who lack passion, but have taste and wit for graceful comedy. There seems to be more hope of tragedy on the Continent, where "Die Versunkene Glocke," "Cyrano de Bergerac," and

perhaps even "El Gran Galeotto," support the prophecy so often made recently, especially in France, that the day has passed alike for well-built machines and slices of life, and that the world is learning over again that for its serious plays it must depend upon the poets. In years there has been no such welcome to a tragedy by cultivated Frenchmen as has been received by "Cyrano." Victor Hugo had, like all but a few of his countrymen, more sentiment than tragic passion, and there has really been no tragedy of the highest kind since "Faust." The explanation that the world has grown away from poetry is, perhaps, disposed of by the fact that no mind was ever more filled with the messages of science than Goethe's. Although science may have added nothing to the material of imagination, it has destroyed nothing, but, like other absorbing interests, it suffers from offences committed in its name. Poetic tragedy will survive Darwin as easily as it survived Newton and Copernicus. The greatest literary ideas are dramatic ideas; most of the world's highest literature is poetry, and most of its highest poetry is drama. We need not fear that modern times are undramatic, for artistic genius is creative, and when it exists it will create somewhat in its universal manner.

Creative plays scatter in passing maxims the kind of truths of which one is distended into a philosophic drama. There are enough generalizations in "Lear" or "Tasso" to give themes to a library of intellectual plays, but they are unessential fragments in their place, strewn along the path of their main conception, which is larger than any abstract proposition. The greatest artistic ideas which the human mind ever conceives are fables. "Wallenstein" and "Othello" start from the story, and general statements spring from it, while in the problem dramas the generalization is made first

and the facts invented, so that the plot, instead of being the grandest conception of the race, is at best what one man can do. None of the greatest plays has a plot invented wholly by the author. They tell a story which irradiates truth in many directions, while the piece which is constructed to fit a proposition is concentrated in the proof of the notion on which it started. It would not be difficult to write out in a few sentences the meaning of "*L'Ami des Femmes*," "*The Doll's House*," "*The Devil's Disciple*," or "*The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith*," but it would be as absurd to ask what is the meaning of "*Macbeth*," "*The Tempest*," or "*Iphigenia*," as it would be to sum up the story and character of Julius Caesar in a proposition. Great dramatic ideas are imaginative and emotional conceptions, and the nearest to an exact abstract statement that can be made about them will tell what feeling of life they imbue. Nobody who felt life greatly could deem "*Troilus and Cressida*" a better drama than "*Othello*," as one British playwright and critic does, finding its superiority in its comparatively dingy and paltry motives, which he thinks make it worthy of the nineteenth century. He wants nothing imitated in the drama except what he is capable of fully comprehending. He is like the people at whom La Bruyère laughed for admiring pictures of things when in the things themselves he saw nothing interesting.

As the principal part of any large moral or artistic idea is old, it being an accumulation and not a rapid birth, the greatest dramatists of one age are more like those of another than they are like smaller ones nearer their own time. Sophocles has more essentially in common with Shakespeare than he has with Voltaire. Comedy has a more changing aspect, but the sublime differs little from century to century. It is now as true as it was when Aristotle

wrote, that many men can make scenes, and many can even make characters, but none but the rare genius can handle a plot. "Fate makes greater tragedies than playwrights," says Echegaray. The great poet accepts largely the work of fate. He alone can tell a great story so that it keeps all of its greatness. He accepts the facts, and emphasizes them. Far from showing that there are no entirely good men and none entirely bad, he makes his heroes more heroic than nature and his villains blacker than life. In love he tells most often of the first, not because it is more important or exists more certainly than later and more conscious love, but because it is more dramatic. Romeo and Juliet can be the centre of the tragedy, but to make the loves of Anthony and Cleopatra sublime they need to be set in a drama of the nations.

The great dramatic truths are clear. Nothing is more impotent in art than the vague and mysterious suggestions attempted by playwrights who rejoice in entangling qualities of character instead of clarifying them. The playwright who accumulates motives, and thinks he is not bound to give them any more consistency than they have in life, is no dramatist. Shakespeare threw Caliban on to the earth, alive. Renan wrote a philosophic and symbolic play about part of him, Browning wrote a lengthy poem about another aspect of him, Shakespeare simply made him speak and act. Commentators talk about what he stands for. Whatever he means there he is, clear and complete. Are the dramatic ideas in "*The Tempest*," or in "*Caliban*" and "*Caliban upon Setebos*?" People discuss to this day whether Hamlet was mad, yet he is as real and distinct to us as he would be if he lived, and probably Lear has told the world more about insanity than any treatise. These pictures are clear, not because the plays are about

insanity, for they are not, but because they disentangle from the mass of reality in the universe two stories carried on by characters of enlarged proportions, that we all can see, and it happens that among these characters are a young man, whose mind sometimes reels with the swaying of the world, and another man whose old brain crumbles with the battering of destiny. The truth of genius is clear, and the truth of science is clear also, but in another way, an abstract way, that cannot be reconverted into dramatic life. The witches and ghosts of Shakespeare—Ariel, Caliban, and Puck—are as much alive as Brutus or Cressida. This imaginative distinctness cannot exist without beauty, for the imagination is largely reached through the senses. It is in vain that we try to lower the story, the persons, or the words, to actual life. If we do so, seeking scientific accuracy, we lose the clearness we had, since that kind of truth cannot be derived from beauty. Poets are men who see emotional truth with sureness and express it with its own charm, which is conveyed through the harmonies of words and images. As Longinus has it, "Beautiful words are the very light of thought." The only ideas of value in tragedy are the ideas whose light is beauty.

In comedy the fixed laws are less in conflict with the spirit of our time. Even a strong tragedy would stir the public to-day, but a deep comedy would have a wider hearing since, while tragedy is general, comedy can paint those details of contemporary life for which the English-speaking public now have such an appetite. The audience for comedy has always been largest, and the increase of education and the consequent heterogeneity of audiences may well increase the difference. That sadder knowledge of mankind which is given by tragic art can never be valued by the whole peo-

ple as highly as special information about ourselves lighted by universal truth, which is the substance of the higher comic drama. Again, the fact that successful tragedy can exist only in verse gives an advantage to comedy in an age addicted to prose. The exhilaration which any art must give, and which is accomplished by the tragic poet through beauty of language, imagery and verse, and through breadth and idealization of characters and action, in comedy springs from the intellectual mirth aroused by a distinct and easy exhibition of the foibles of mankind set in grotesque situations, varying, even at its height, from the gentle irony of *Tartuffe* to the rollicking burlesque of *Bardolph*, *Pistol*, and *Nym*, but always appealing partly to the reason, until it descends to empty farce, where, whether it be in the "*Two Dromios*" or in "*The Private Secretary*," the amusement is immediate and wholly independent of reasonable ideas. Probably the greatest comedy is that which combines the immediate broad absurdity of farce with deep psychology, as in *Falstaff*, and "*Les Précieuses Ridicules*," rather than in characters like those of "*Le Misanthrope*" and "*Les Femmes Savantes*," which, without meaning more to the trained intelligence, escape the uncultivated. Whether, however, comedy be broad or fine, so long as it escapes farce, it is critical, and therefore the best dramatic medium for expressing an age of analysis and common sense; but, as it is art, this expression must fill even scientific fact and reasonable criticism with enjoyment and content. No art is great unless by it we are released from care and taught to extract pleasure from our human limitations. Had a tragedian handled "*The Masterbuilder*" or "*Mrs. Tanqueray*" the public might have called them sad, but never disagreeable. Had they been the themes of a comedian, the strain would be re-

laxed, fresh air thrown into their atmosphere, and joy taken in the free play of the author with his creatures, when he is picturing them as they are and not bending every nerve to suggest what they should be. Although there can be no logical proof that serious propagandism cannot instil life into a drama, there is the firmer demonstration of experience. "*La Femmes de Claude*" is held down by its thesis, while "*Les Précieuses Ridicules*," exhibiting and not arguing, changed the face of a society.

In England to-day, which is so entirely removed from tragedy, several men stand on the verge of comedy. In artificial smart dialogue, what British dramatist since Sheridan has surpassed "*You Never Can Tell*" and parts of "*Arms and the Man*?" If Mr. Shaw knew wit from defiance, insight from egotism, and a dramatic situation from an intellectual one, he might be a legitimate successor to Congreve and Wycherley, neither of whom has done any single scene much better than the first act of "*Arms and the Man*" would be with the excessive Shawism excised. It is not yet too late to hope that our scintillating jester may sicken of pugnacity and the eternal endeavor to prove his own traits heroic, after which maturing only co-operation with some one of more dramatic instinct—with Mr. Pinero, Mr. Gillette, or even Mr. Jones or Mr. Grundy—would be needed to establish him on the stage and in literature. The most successful comedy in several decades, "*Le Gendre de M. Poirier*," deals with a definite contemporary idea, and, although Augier's mind was not without its commonplace aspects, it combined so many qualities, especially clearness of vision, constructive ability, and refinement of humor, that he was able to put social truth into what is essentially a play. Mr. Pinero, Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Barrie combine more of

the higher comic dramatic gifts than their fellow-playwrights, though neither has single touches of dialogue superior to Mr. Shaw's. What puts Mr. Barrie in one direction beyond them all is a more solid character-building. Mr. Shaw's personages are fragments, and Mr. Pinero's do not equal his situations or his dialogue. Creation of individuals has largely made the fame of two novelists who are apparently on the brink of dramatic effort, and if the attempts of Mr. Meredith and Mr. Hardy in the new field correspond with Mr. Barrie's, the inevitable return of the best narrative minds from fiction to the stage will have begun. Mr. James and Mr. Howell have made their trials, but their strokes lack breadth and their situations lack motion. In our stronger novelists we see the greatest promise for a drama of larger ideas than any now animating English comedy. Sir Willoughby Paternoe, Christopher North, the Scotch Elders, the Chocolate Cream Soldier, and Gabriel Oak are the very stuff of which high comedy is made, as Nora and Paula might be if they were conceived in a more expansive spirit and drawn with a freer hand.

When the world has decided that the novel is an inferior form, some of the ideas which have recently been absorbed by fiction will animate the drama, the Tolstoys of the future will be our tragedians and the Thackerays our comedians. What Hauptmann and Sudermann have done almost single-handed since they turned to the German stage, is a hint of the impetus which the English theatre might receive from a few minds who should help to give the public the contemporary standards which it now lacks, perhaps some day making possible again Aristotle's complaint that the critics expected the dramatist to excel in all branches of his art. Before the revival can come, harsh and joyless

criticism of life, which is now condemned in the pulpit, must be banished from the stage, and "Jude" and "Ghosts" must follow discourses on natural depravity to that grave which yawns for useless truth. In expressing the ideas of his time, the genius selects those which inspire and multiply and those which are inseparably married to beautiful forms. The prophet of gloomy fact in France has declared with a groan that the world was turning from his gospel, and until the rejection is complete the intelligent public

will stay at home, or seek refuge in farce and melodrama. Whatever love of narrow logic may exist permanently in the country which produced "La Femme de Claude" and "Les Idées de Madame Aubray," England has always been the home of poetry in the modern world, and, when the drama revives, beauty will soften its tragedy, and the spirit of Falstaff give at once intelligence and happiness to its comedy.

Norman Haggood.

The Contemporary Review.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND :

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER III.

One of the maids at Stalland House had a curious experience on the following morning. She was an old and trusted servant of the family, and it was her duty to attend to the drawing-room. On this occasion she was at work unusually early, having received strict commands from Lady Stalland to keep a careful lookout for the lost diamond, and to allow no other servant to assist her. For this reason she began the ordinary drudgery with a good spirit, and was toiling quietly but thoroughly, when she heard a footstep on the stairs. It was too early, she thought, for guests to be about, and the tread was a peculiarly cautious one, so she paused to listen. The footsteps came slowly nearer, but more cautiously than before; a moment later the door was pushed back, and the bishop of Hexminster entered the room.

As she afterwards declared in the kitchen, "It gave her quite a turn." "He came quiet-like, as if he didn't

want any one to hear him," she said, "and he seemed all upset when he saw me in the room. And his face—why, it was as white as a sheet."

"Had a bad night, perhaps," suggested the cook. "It was very warm."

"He was thinking about his sermon, no doubt," said the second footman. "They say he preaches beautiful."

This idea was considered a good one, and only Martin, who was leaning in grave silence against the dresser, failed to join in the chorus of agreement. The nurse, who had just come down, then contributed her share to the discussion.

"You should see how Miss Connie takes to him," she began. "He must be a good man, or children wouldn't fancy him so. Why, only last night she thought she heard him coming upstairs, and what did she do but slip out of her cot and run to the balusters. And what do you think she called him?"

"Something out of the way, I'll be bound," said the cook. "There never was such a child for queer ideas."

"Well, she calls him 'the wobber.' She will have it that he's 'the wobber.' Such a name for a bishop, isn't it now?"

"Wobber? It must be 'robber.' I wonder what she means by that?" asked the cook.

The nurse had opened her lips to reply, when she became aware that Martin was looking at her with an expression which said, as plainly as possible, "Silence!" No one else noticed it, but the meaning of the look was so clear that the nurse, who was engaged to Martin, and therefore knew him very well, closed her mouth with an almost audible snap, and wondered.

"Talking about robbers," said the housemaid who had cleaned the drawing-room, "there's my lady's diamond not found yet. Sir Edward will soon be in a nice excitement."

The vagaries of Miss Connie were immediately forgotten, and the new subject warmly taken up. Eventually it was decided that the diamond must be lying all the time in some very safe and simple spot, where it would soon be found. This decision was built upon absolute ignorance of the ways of diamonds in general; but even Martin seemed to support it.

Meanwhile the bishop was walking in the garden. The night had neither calmed his mind nor restored his courage, for he had failed to sleep. He had, instead, spent the dark hours in feverish reviews of what had occurred; in alternating agonies of fear, self-reproach, doubt and self-abasement. His brow seemed to have several new furrows in it, his eyes had lost their benignity, and his cheeks were unnaturally pale.

After long consideration he had decided upon a craven but simple course—the one he had so carefully suggested to Martin. He had descended the stairs with great caution, intending to deposit the gem in some spot in the

drawing-room where it might be found easily, yet not too easily. It had given him a serious shock to find the room occupied, and he had retreated from the vicinity with guilty haste. He was already suffering all the tremors of the repentant, faint-hearted criminal.

Now, in the garden, the fresh air cheered him a little. Surely this difficulty must soon be at an end. Of course it must. Why, the diamond could be placed almost anywhere, and almost any one would find it. That would be a much easier, much better way of setting things right than if he went to Stalland with his story—such a cock-and-bull story as it seemed, too. For a moment he thought of dropping it in the center of the path, where the gardener should find it when he came; but reflection forbade. The man might tread it under foot; he might prove to be as ignorant of diamonds as a bishop, mistake it for a piece of glass, and throw it away. Besides, even if it were found there and restored, would not questions arise as to how it came to the garden at all? He walked on, pondering and weighing the possibilities.

Some time later he returned to the house, and, to his relief, found the drawing-room empty. Standing on the hearthrug in his old place, he carefully surveyed the scene of operations. Here was his chance.

The rugs would not do, for of course they had been thoroughly shaken and searched, as well as the chairs and cushions. At last, however, he decided to place his unhappy find near the hearth, under the shadow of the great fender. During the day it would surely be found. Why, he might even find it himself. Then he shuddered at his own growing duplicity.

He took the jewel from its place and stooped down by the fender. His hand was extended—the thing was almost done—when—

"Ah!" said a voice. "That diamond, is it?"

The bishop gasped and stood erect. Sir Edward Stalland had entered unnoticed.

"I am afraid it's of no use looking there," he added, shaking his head. "It is very kind of you to take such an interest, all the same. The thing's stolen without a doubt."

The bishop recovered his presence of mind. He had unconsciously "palmed" the diamond at the first alarm, and felt amazed to find himself so expert a thief. But Sir Edward had seen nothing.

"Yes," he answered, lamely, burning his boats behind him as he spoke. "Yes; it is undoubtedly stolen."

There was no going back, no explaining after that. Nor did he get another opportunity of being alone in the room, for Commander Digby came in just then and did not go out again until breakfast was announced. Then every one seemed to be lingering about in the way, and the time passed uselessly until he was obliged to prepare for the walk to church.

The numbers who had gathered to hear the bishop preach that morning were not entirely satisfied with the result. It was undoubtedly a good sermon, as a bishop's must always be; but there was something lacking. There was a curious hesitation, a want of force and vigor. The clear voice was not so clear as usual; the sentences did not come so freely; the speaker was absent and constrained in manner. Then it was whispered that his lordship was unwell, a suggestion to which his troubled face gave full authority, and the general surprise was changed into general sympathy.

The guests from the house walked back across the fields in groups; but the bishop did not take part in the easy talk that prevailed. He walked alone,

deep in his own unhappy musings, until some one joined him uninvited.

"Wobber," said a friendly voice, "it's only me."

The bishop looked down into the sunny face of Miss Connie. He was considerably startled by the form of address.

"I think you's getting tired of being a wobber," she went on, laughingly. "Isn't you?"

He sighed heavily. His knowledge of children was small, and he lived under the mistaken impression that their words were not intended for the serious notice of older folk. This child was evidently still thinking of their idle talk on the previous evening. He suddenly remembered it.

Following up the same train of thought, she continued, half in persuasion now:

"When you's tired you can give up the game. Will you give it up now?"

"What game, my dear?" inquired the bishop in all innocence.

"The wobber-game," was the simple answer. "You can give back the diamond you wobbed."

That was a blow indeed. The bishop almost gave a cry, and the child uttered a tiny scream. In his sudden agitation, he had pressed her little hand with painful force.

With the blow came a revelation—a quick and complete understanding. She had seen him pick up the diamond; she was aware that he had it. Her form of address had been anything but meaningless, after all.

In a husky voice he asked for further light. Her clear, questioning gaze was positively painful.

"Have you told any one else, my dear? Does anybody know?"

The answer was prompt and reassuring. "Nobody knows. I never tells till afterwards."

The robber tried to comprehend the last enigmatical sentence, but it was

too great a task for his bewildered mind. His accuser explained it herself.

"'Tisn't fair to tell before the end of the game. Is it, wobbler?"

The game? At first this seemed a singularly cold-blooded way of speaking, but clearer recollection made it plain. This little one, her life full of happy "make-believes," supposed that he was really playing at "robbers," and that his capture of the diamond was part of the game. He saw a gleam of hope. If the child's lips could be sealed for a while things would surely right themselves. Afterwards no one would heed her talk, and the danger would be past.

"You won't tell," he said, gently, and with a hypocritical smile. "You won't tell anybody until—until to-morrow night. Promise!"

"I won't tell anybody until to-morrow night, wobbler," was the ready reply. "Not until to-morrow night."

"Then," said the bishop to himself. "I shall, I hope, be far enough away;" and he actually congratulated himself upon his cleverness!

But the alarms of that day were by no means over. Miss Connie left his side before the house was reached, in order to return to her nurse. Some of the party went indoors, and others lingered on the lawn. The bishop went directly to the drawing-room, only to find Commander Digby lazily lounging in the easiest chair. Baffled and vexed, he then made his way to the farthest walks of the garden.

Careless of where he went, he came at last to a small wicket-gate and passed through, only dimly perceiving that he had entered the region of the kitchen-garden. After going some little distance, however, he was disturbed by the sound of voices in conversation.

They came from the other side of a thick privet-hedge. In another moment his footsteps must have been audible,

but he paused there, intending to return. Then the first sentences that reached his ear fixed him to the spot as if spellbound.

"It's the bishop, Celia. He's got the diamond!"

The voice was that of Martin, the footman. In the silence which followed, the eavesdropper heard his own heart-beats.

"You *may* look surprised," the voice went on, in a subdued, yet distinct tone, "but it's true enough. I'm telling you, Celia, 'cause of little Miss Connie. She knows that he's got it, and so do I, and so do you now. But nobody else must know, so I want you to stop the little one from letting it out."

Again a silence, during which the bishop stood as if turned to marble. Then Martin continued:

"It was last night, when I took the lamp into the drawing-room. The bishop was there, with Miss Connie on the rug in front of him. Just as I got in he noticed something on the floor—something bright and shiny. When Miss Connie wasn't looking, as he thought, he made a dart for that bright, shiny thing, and picked it up. You can guess what it was?"

"The diamond!" murmured the other voice in a tone of awe. It was the voice of a woman.

"Yes, the diamond. It was done in a flash, but I saw it plainly. No doubt Miss Connie saw it, too, though she didn't pretend to; and that's why she calls him a robber, as you said this morning. You'll have to stop that, Celia. It would be awful if anybody else heard her and noticed."

"But what did he do it for?" was the horrified question. "He—a bishop, too!"

"What did he do it for?" answered Martin, so quietly that the unsuspected listener scarcely heard. "Why, because he was mad—nothing else. He's the honestest man in the world; but

when he picked up that diamond he was mad. He was mad at dinner, too, when he told them all that he hadn't seen it; but directly afterwards he saw my eye on him, and came straight to himself. 'Martin,' he says, when they got up, 'come to me in the library,' 'cause he knew then that I had seen everything. And when we got to the library he was as sane as ever. 'It's about Lady Stalland's diamond, Martin,' he says, solemn as a judge. 'You know that nobody would have taken it deliberately, seeing what he was doing. Temptation is sometimes too strong for the best intentions; it comes like a sudden madness.' And then he goes on: 'The person who has taken this diamond,' he says, 'has repented, and will at once restore it to its owner in some way or other, and leave the scene forever. And I am sure, Martin, that no one will say a word about it.' It was awful, Cella, to hear the likes of him begging mercy of the likes of me, and a great lump got into my throat. 'No, my lord,' says I; 'I'm sure of that.' 'Then that will do,' he answers, thankful-like. 'We quite understand each other, Martin—that will do.' And then the interview was over."

"What a dreadful thing!" said the voice of Cella, whom the bishop rightly supposed to be the nurse. "What a dreadful thing! A real bishop, too!"

Those who have known what it is to be condemned by the distorted evidence of their own words, will sympathize with the bishop. Martin's easy, but earnest, story was such a hideously true version of what had taken place that he could scarcely believe his ears. The difference, of course, lay in the point of view from which the story was told; but before he could arrange

his scattered recollections, the footman began once more:

"Of course it will be all as right as ninepence by to-morrow. The diamond will be found, and all that, and it won't matter much, whatever Miss Connie says. But till it is found, you'll have to see that she says nothing about the bishop to any one. Why, Cella, I'd rather have stolen the thing myself than let any one think that he did."

There was a brief pause. "I wouldn't, then," said Miss Cella, decidedly. "We being engaged, I wouldn't."

A short laugh from Martin was succeeded by a peculiar but unmistakable sound, which caused the bishop to blush even in the midst of his shame and dismay. Then the footman resumed the ordinary use of his lips.

"You don't know, Cella, how good he is, and how well he treated me when I was at the palace. I only wish I was back there again. Mad he may be, sometimes, but the Bible says that learning a lot is apt to make folks mad, and that's the way with him. Other times, I can tell you, he's an out-and-out gentleman. But perhaps we'd better get in now. Lunch will be almost ready."

The last words broke the spell under which the listener had been rooted to his place behind the privet-hedge. While Martin and his companion were taking an affectionate leave of each other, he retreated along the path with swift but silent steps, escaped through the wicket into the shrubberies, and sought a garden seat. There he sank down, in a state of mind which cannot be described.

"Good heavens!" he murmured, after a few moments' deep mental agony. "Good heavens! I wonder what will happen next!"

W. E. Cule.

AN AUSTRALIAN BUSHMAN.

In Mr. James Tyson, the millionaire whose death was reported from Sydney a few days ago, Australia has lost a remarkable personality, and a citizen whose career was so typical in some of its leading characteristics as almost to epitomize in itself the history of the pastoral industry in Australia. Mr. Tyson was as a lad, and remained to the end of his life, a bushman pure and simple. Though he accumulated great wealth, he recognized none of the ordinary civilized uses of money, but maintained throughout his career the frugal habits of the beginning, working no less continuously at seventy than he had worked at seventeen, wearing habitually a shabby suit of ready-made clothes, with a silver watch, of which a bootlace formed the guard, and eating only the same hard fare that had served him when, as a young laborer, he took the position of "leading scythe" on the station of two brothers of the name of Vine. His life was lived in the open air, and as a man of over seventy years of age he was able to say of himself that he had never entered a church, or a theatre, or a public-house, that he had never tasted beer, wine, nor spirits, that he had never sworn, and that he had never washed with soap—he used sand instead—nor worn a white shirt or a glove. He was of splendid, though somewhat spare and hard, physique, and at seventeen stood six feet, four inches in his stockings. His figure, as known more familiarly of late years, was that of a square-shouldered, slightly stooping, but active man, with a keen face set below a crop of iron-gray hair, and distinguished by particularly bright, deep-set gray eyes.

He was born in Australia in 1822, his father being a Cumberland man of re-

puted Flemish or Belgian descent, and his mother an English woman of the name of Coates. Mr. Tyson was interested towards the end of his life to learn that the translation of his French name was "firebrand," and observed thoughtfully, "Maybe I could have set the world on fire a bit, too, if I had tried." But his energies were directed from the beginning into a totally different channel. He was essentially a man of peace. The most offensive weapon that he was ever known to have carried was the scythe, and he himself attributed his success in the world to the simple fact that, having begun life as a mower, he "mowed longer and stronger than other men."

His first experience of earning his own bread outside the family circle began when he was seventeen, and lasted for two years and a half, during which time he received wages at the rate of £30 a year. The position of leading scythe involved work too heavy for so young a man. His fellow-laborers were jealous of seeing him in the post of foreman, and to the end of his life he would tell, with the keenness of a well-remembered battle, how, through three mowing seasons, they tried to "cut him out" by taking a long swath; but he, being tall and strong, was able to take his full swath and still keep ahead. Such pastoral contests were, of course, long before the days of improved machinery. At the end of two years and a half, with the loyal assistance, which he never forgot to mention, of the widowed mother who made and mended for him, he had saved £60. His next step was to a cattle station where, in a remote district of the then little-known interior, he lived absolutely alone, herding bullocks, and in constant

danger of his life from the black men still unaccustomed to a white occupation of the country. On this station he remained for a year and a half, working again very hard, and saved £36. With the £96 thus carefully accumulated, he proposed to set up with his brother on a cattle station of his own, but at this juncture the bank in which he had deposited his first £60 failed, and, though he was repaid a portion of the money, he had again to work for wages.

Once more he saved till, having accumulated £100, he was able to carry out his project, and established himself with his brother on a station on the Billybong river, in the back country of New South Wales. He had not yet surmounted his early misfortunes, for here in their first year they were overtaken by drought, and all their newly-purchased cattle died. He received at this time an offer to take charge of some cattle on a system known as "thirds"—that is, the risk to the owner and a third of the increase to the caretaker. It was necessary to have some money for first expenses, and in his extremity he remembered that Sir John Hay, for whom he had a year or two previously driven cattle, owed him £5. He knew only with regard to Sir John Hay that he lived somewhere on the Murray river, at a distance of about two hundred miles. The country lying between the Murray and the Billybong was practically trackless, but deciding that, if he followed the tributaries of the Billybong into the dividing range, the streams flowing down the other side of the hills must bring him to the Murray, he started on horseback to endeavor to find his debtor. He had exactly one shilling, and he took it with him, together with some food. The way proved longer than he expected. After a day or two his food was finished, and for three days he kept himself alive by plucking handfuls of the

sweet grass and chewing it as he went along.

Mr. Tyson was never married, but even the bush has its possibilities of romance, and it was at this time that he met the lady in whose power it would seem to have lain to change the tenor of his life. He was then twenty-three, and fifty years later he described the incident with a vividness of detail which bore witness to the tenacity of the impression produced.

He had crossed the range, and being weak with hunger, had begun to fear what the ordinary man might well have feared from the beginning—namely, that he might never find the house of Sir John Hay, when he perceived a cottage and an old man about to enter. He approached, wishing to ask his way, but hesitating, in consequence of a shyness of habit which throughout his life caused him to shun intercourse with strangers. As he reluctantly drew near the door, a young woman came suddenly out—"a beautiful young bush-reared girl, dark, rosy, and well grown." He told her that he had wished to ask his way. She looked at him, and without answering his question, bade him come in and eat. He refused. She then laid both hands upon his arm, and with gentle compulsion drew him in, saying, "You are hungry, come in and eat." Being "well-nigh famished" and supposing that she "saw the truth in his face," he let himself do as she bid. She called to her sister to help to get some food ready, and in a few minutes he was sitting before a good breakfast. He was not in all more than fifteen minutes in the house, he never spoke to the girl again, but for twenty years he continued to visit the neighborhood and inquire after her until he learned that she was married. Then he thought it was time to discontinue his visits. His shyness, he explained, in telling the story afterwards, kept him from seek-

ing to speak to her again, but he added, "She was the only woman I ever thought of marrying."

He did not obtain his £5, but returned hungry again from Sir John Hay's, not by way of the cottage, but following the river and catching fish as he went. He spent his shilling on the ferry which took him back to his own side of the river, and having, notwithstanding his lack of funds, determined to accept the proposal of taking cattle on thirds, he was driving his herd to his station when he met his brother, who told him that he had sold the station for £12. With this capital life had to be begun again. The two brothers drove the cattle far afield, and on July 8, 1846, Mr. Tyson being then nearly twenty-four years of age, they settled upon the Murrumbidgee, on land which Mr. Tyson continued to hold for the rest of his life. Their cattle thrived, and the beginning was made of the fortune which has since accumulated in Mr. Tyson's hands. It was in this way, by the adventure of individuals who simply passed on beyond the borders of civilized occupation, that the pastoral settlement of Australia was in the early days effected.

About five years later—Mr. Tyson and his brother having apparently dissolved their partnership in the meantime—gold was found in Victoria. The Bendigo diggings were opened, and Mr. Tyson began to supply the gold-fields with meat. The profits made were very large, but the general anticipation was that the market would not last. Stock owners, intending to make hay while the sun shone, disposed of all their cattle, selling but not buying. Mr. Tyson, forming a more accurate forecast of the position, believed, on the contrary, that the market would last. He kept himself informed of all stock being driven towards the field, and while he sold at Bendigo he bought from the owners for ready money on

the road. They, glad enough to take a fair profit and save risk and travel, parted with their stock at a comparatively low price. He extended his operations, first to the buying of cattle not only on the road but as far north as Queensland, and then to the buying of stations as well as stock in all parts of Australia. On his stations he was active in sinking wells, putting up fences, and introducing new stock. He came thus to be one of the richest, and finally the largest, landowner in the seven colonies. At the time of his death his freehold estate comprised no less than half a million acres, and his leaseholds extended over many thousands of square miles.

Having practically no use for money and spending none upon his personal requirements, his wealth accumulated to enormous proportions, and a few years before his death he was accredited with the possession of £5,000,000.

His simple habits gave rise to endless anecdotes, many of which were founded on an erroneous conception that he was of a miserly disposition. Of these, the following may be quoted as one fairly illustrative of his simplicity in regard to money matters and of the peculiarly secular attitude of a mind which placed churches, theatres, and public-houses in the same category of places to be avoided. Near one of his stations it was considered desirable in the interest of the local population to erect a little iron church. He was asked to pay for it. He replied that he had no objection, but on one condition only—namely, that the whole bill of costs was to be made out and presented for payment in one sum, and that he should not be bothered by requests for future contributions. The condition was accepted, and he gave a cheque without criticism for the full amount of the estimate presented. The following year, on his return to the station, the responsible authorities ap-

proached him again, remembering his condition and apologizing for breaking it, but saying that a most essential item had been forgotten. They begged that he would, therefore, reconsider his determination, and give them £20 more for a lightning conductor. His reply was an emphatic negative. "That I will not," he said; "I have given a church to Almighty God, and if He cannot take care of it for Himself, He does not deserve to have it." As a matter of fact, it was fairly clear that he had little or no appreciation of the power of wealth. It was suggested to him once that he should give two warships to the nation, and call one the "Firebrand" and the other the "Mower" as a memorial to his name and calling. The idea pleased him for a moment, but only as a foolish sort of toy with which he had no practical concern, and there is no record that he ever thought seriously of putting it into execution. His money did not interest him. He used to say of it, "I shall just leave it behind me when I go. I shall have done with it then, and it will not concern me afterwards." "But," he would add, with a characteristic semi-exultant snap of the fingers, "the money is nothing. It was the little game that was the fun!" Being asked once, "What was the little game?" he replied, with an energy of concentration peculiar to him, "Fighting the desert! That has been my work! I have been fighting the desert all my life, and I have won! I have put water where was no water, and beef where was no beef. I have put fences where there were no fences, and roads where there were no roads. Nothing can undo what I have done, and millions will be happier for it after I am long dead and forgotten."

To him, as to others of the pioneer stock-owners in the early days of the expansion of Australian settlement, the "desert" was an enemy to be sub-

dued and tamed for the uses of civilization. The fight with it was an epic of heroic endurance and marvellous achievement, of which the incidents that might be related are almost infinite. Mr. Tyson was not the only one of the early pastoralists in the back country of Australia who learned to live alone till they almost lost the use of the ordinary speech of human intercourse. But his long and lonely life, in which there was no time to spare from arduous work for the formation of friendship or any of the common ties, no thought of seeking or enjoying any of the ordinary elements of human happiness, no room, apparently, for any aspiration but that which impelled him to the ever-expanding though peaceful conquest of fresh territory, is typical of the instinctive energy by which the borders of the Empire have been enlarged. He was entirely Australian, and had no experience beyond the limits of the Australian colonies. At seventy-one years of age, having never had a holiday in his life, he entertained for a time the thought of winding up his affairs and starting to see the world before he died, but finally condemned his own project as being too idle and self-indulgent.

His life, except for the activity of his work, which obliged him to spend the greater part of his time in journeys from one end of Australia to the other, was the life of a recluse. He formed no special friendships with men, and had the reputation of being a woman-hater. The reputation was probably no better founded than the reputation for miserliness with which he was also accredited. His attitude towards women, based avowedly on a very narrow experience, was more properly to be described as indifference than hate. He thought that they needed more robustness and simplicity, alike of body and mind. Wives generally, he held, were fond of dress and had scolding

tempers, and were spiteful to other women. They seemed to him to be bred in such a way that they had their minds full of small things, and he summed it all up in the opinion that "it is a deal for husbands to bear." At the same time, he described himself as one whom a woman, who had been any way kind to him, might have twisted round her finger. For which reason he thought that it was for the best that he had not married. A wife would, he supposed, have wanted him to settle down and do as other men, and waste his time, which "would have been a pity, for my work would not have been done." He preferred to be alone, and had always gone, he said, from first to last, single-handed. As for friendship, he would not take his time for it; he could not be wasting his days.

Asked towards the end of his life whether he had ever been happy, he replied with a certain brave simplicity: "Sufficiently so; I am persuaded that attainment is nothing; the pleasure is in the pursuit, and I have been pursuing all my life. Yes, I consider that I have been happier than most men." He was a kind, though strict, employer, a just and exact paymaster, and punctual in the performance of all duties that he recognized. Having read little, and, in consequence of his shy habits, discussed few but practical problems with his fellows, he had arrived by mere process of silent cogitation at many of the conclusions accepted in the more advanced circles of

London Times.

English thought. On questions of religion his creed was as simple and effective as the rest of his life. With theology he would not concern himself. "It ain't my business. I do what I think seriously right; I stand to take my chance; and I have no fear." Pressed with the obvious question, "Why do you do what you think seriously right? Why not drink and play the fool like other men?" he had an answer which satisfied himself. "You see, the fun is in the little game. Every man who chooses has his little game, with a fair chance of winning if he keeps straight. It is better worth his while to do what he seriously thinks right. If he don't, he is bound to lose. Yes, I believe every man has a good chance of winning. That's enough for me; the rest don't concern me; I don't think of it."

His view expresses the view of duty commonly accepted on the Australian continent. In this, as in everything else, he was strictly of his time and country. In his narrowness, his vigor, his total lack of æsthetic cultivation, his indifference to the use of the great financial instruments which he had created as a mere incident in his own career, but above all in his latent reserves of heroism and tenderness, he offered a remarkable specimen of the rough rock from which British character is hewn. If there had been no Englishmen of Mr. Tyson's stamp, there would have been no British supremacy in an Empire extending round the world.

PENNY FICTION.

There are few phenomena so pregnant with instruction for the cool-headed and impartial student of history as the regularity with which the sanguine predictions of Liberal think-

ers have been falsified. The French Revolution was to have regenerated France, and through France, the human race. It has regenerated nobody in particular. The great Exhibition of

1851 was to have ushered in an era of universal peace. It proved to be the precursor of a series of momentous wars. The adoption of Free Trade principles by Great Britain was to have inaugurated a day in which all nations were to be uniformly prosperous, and the rivalry of commerce was to be a sort of amicable emulation in good works. As a matter of fact, for all the rest of the civilized world, including our own dependencies, the past fifty years have been a period of rigid protection, while the struggle for national existence and expansion has become keener than ever. The expulsion of the Austrians from Italy, and the unification of that country under the royal house of Savoy, were to have meant the substitution of constitutional freedom for arbitrary oppression, and of prosperity for starvation. In truth, they have driven Italy to the verge of bankruptcy and ruin. Her political life is, perhaps, more petty and contemptible than that of any of her neighbors, with the exception always of Greece, while want and misery stalk undisguised through all her towns and villages. And that is not the worst of it. The justly discredited prophet—confronted with the failure of his pet vaticinations, his “dead snips,” so to speak—used always to have something to fall back upon. Disgusted at the persistency with which the effete populations of Europe clung to their bad old instincts and traditions, he had only to cast his rolling eye to the West in order to behold a mighty nation, which, disfigured though it might be by a few trifling faults such as unrivalled political corruption and unheard-of commercial dishonesty, was certain to abstain from meddling with external affairs, was certain to refrain from such abominations as a large army and an efficient navy. Alas! less than twelve months has sufficed to rob our poor friend of this last source of consol-

tion, and to display his darling democracy embarking on an ambitious career of foreign conquest. To be plain, the game of optimist prophecy of the Locksley Hall variety is played out. It may linger in a coterie or two of the academic Radicals. A few very young men, here and there, may pretend to take a hand. But as the nineteenth century draws to its close, no sane man believes (whatever he may try to hope) that mankind will be very much better or very much wiser a hundred years hence. Even Mr. William Watson can only take exception to the symbol of poor old John Bull, and relieve himself occasionally by “cussing and swearing like hanythink.”

In no instance has the event more signally belied the expectation than in that of education. What boundless blessings, we were assured, would flow from it, and from the Act of 1870! The prevailing extravagance of prediction was almost enough to justify a resort to the paradox that many men are better without learning to read or write at all—a view which we should be sorry to maintain. It was foretold that, with instruction widely diffused, the mass of the community would become infinitely more intelligent and enlightened. The artisan would spend his days in honest toil, his nights in the study of Adam Smith, with a dip into Mr. John Mill for a change. The latter philosopher “looked in vain among the working classes in general for the just pride which will choose to give good work for good wages: for the most part, their sole endeavor is to receive as much, and return as little, in the shape of service, as possible” (“Political Economy,” iv. 7. 4). Education was to put that, among other matters, to rights. ’Twas a rosy forecast enough; but as for its realization—that is quite a different story. A quarter of a century of prosperity in every industry except, indeed, agriculture, the

most important of all—unbroken save by mischievous and idiotic strikes—has not been without its effect. It has immensely sharpened the appetite, as it has multiplied the opportunities, of all classes for pleasure and recreation of every description. The taste for athletics (which means the taste for seeing athletes perform, and having "a bit on" oneself) has displaced the liking for more serious affairs. Football flourishes, but Mechanics' Institutes decay. Our "horny-handed" friend, as he sits over his evening pipe and glass of ale, is diligently perusing, not "The Wealth of Nations," nor "A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive," but the selections of "Antolycus," or "Major Mughunter" for the forthcoming spring or autumn handicap. The myopic message-boy, his son, is perusing "The Bold Buccaneers" when he comes into collision with your waistcoat. Ask what work it is in which the seamstress, the shop-girl, the domestic servant is plunged when the labors of the day are over, and you shall find that it is not "Helbeck of Bannisdale," nor "Literature and Dogma," but "Betrayed at the Altar," or "Betrotthed to a Brigand." The unending succession of reprints of good literature is, indeed, a gratifying proof that a section of the new reading public is not without good taste, or at least good guidance. But for one reader who goes to Scott and Dickens, we suspect that a score seek their literary sustenance in very different quarters. There be few who, like Mr. Henley's bar-maid, try "from penny novels to amend their taste."

That the demand for fiction is enormous may safely be inferred from the quantity of the supply. There lie before us no fewer than thirty weekly publications—"Golden Stories," "The Heartsease Library," "Short Stories," "The Princess's Novelette," "The Duchess Novelette," "The Family Her-

ald Supplement," and others—which exist solely for the purpose of ministering to this appetite; and very likely there are some besides, which have not come under our notice. Not one of them, we should suppose, contains less than twenty thousand words, and not one of them costs more than a penny, though some cost less. Many of them seem to have been long in existence. Others are creatures of yesterday. But there is evidently money in such publications for some one, or else we should not find several emanating from the same source. One conductor and publisher, for example, is responsible for at least six such story-papers. Nor do we imagine that Miss Anne S. Swan and her extremely shrewd literary advisers would have entered into this branch of business unless they had, as the saying goes, *smelt roast meat*. It should be observed, moreover, that in the following remarks we have purposely left out of account papers such as "Tit-Bits," "Pearson's Weekly," "Answers," and papers of a different type, such as "Home Chat," "Woman's Life," and "Home Notes," in which fiction occupies a prominent, though by no means an exclusive, place.

Penny novelettes differ from one another in externals rather than in internals. The get-up of the better sort is neat and attractive. The type is clear; and the covers might even be called "artistic," in the catholic sense of the term. The inferior kind are indifferently printed "on gray paper with blunt type;" and there are many degrees of excellence between the two extremes. All, except one, have illustrations, ranging from the rudest of woodcuts to the smudgiest of "process-" plates. Of course, the artist selects the most sensational incidents for his pencil to adorn. The stabbing of the heroine's father by the villain disguised as the hero, the kidnapping of the heroine by Black Tom and his gang of gyp-

sies at the instigation of her jealous rival, the horsewhipping of the villain by the hero in "faultless" evening dress—these and their like naturally present themselves as thoroughly suitable and congenial subjects. In only one of the periodicals before us have we found pictures of real merit. The artist who illustrated "Horner's Penny Stories," No. 267, had not studied the earlier manner of Charles Keene for nothing. "The Family Herald Supplement," alone among periodicals of this class, resolutely declines to have anything to do with pictorial embellishment.

Before proceeding to investigate the contents of our collection, it may be worth while to glance at the advertisements. The advertising columns of a newspaper often furnish the practised eye with a strong indication as to what section of the public it caters for. But we glean no definite information here, beyond a strong hint (borne out by our observation at railway-book-stalls and in railway trains) that the vast majority of penny-novel readers are women. If this be so, it is doubly regrettable that a large portion of the advertising space of a certain number of these novelettes is regularly devoted to the announcements of the most infamous quacks. We cannot more particularly describe the advertisements to which we allude; but their purport is unmistakable, and it is heartily to be wished that the arm of the law were long enough and strong enough to suppress them. For the rest, the ordinary run of the advertisements is harmless enough. There are the inevitable cocoas—all so fragrant, so nutritious, and so economical. There are the wonderful preparations of sawdust which make such delicious home-made bread and tea-cakes. There are the infallible patent medicines, whose proprietors button-hole you and communicate the start-

ling intelligence that "after middle age we turn fast from india-rubber into baked clay," a transition against which their nostrum is a sovereign prophylactic. There is, besides, another class of advertisement from which we somehow augur no great good to the pockets of the leges, but which is a very marked feature of the species of print with which we are dealing. The advertiser, it seems, has an article to sell, in pushing which he is prepared to spend thousands of pounds. He therefore proposes to award a prize worth £50 to *every one* who succeeds in correctly filling up the blanks in the following three words, which are the names, say, of three celebrated publishers: 1. Bl*ckw**d. 2. M*rr*y. 3. L*ngm*n. The only conditions of entering the competition are the remittance of P.O. for five shillings and the purchase of what the advertiser wishes to sell. The "Free Watch" and "Free Portrait" offers seem to be merely varieties of this generic type of advertisement. Ill as we can afford to go without anything worth £50, we confess to never having tried our luck, and that, as Rob Roy said, for three sufficient reasons. In the first place, as the reader must have gathered, the puzzles set are of an extreme difficulty, and would take up too much time. In the second place, we would not for worlds involve the generous benefactor who offers such rewards for well-applied ingenuity in serious pecuniary loss. And, in the third place, we never by any chance desired to possess the chattel or commodity to whose merits the advertisement professes to draw attention. But we cannot help thinking that the experiences of a successful competitor would make highly exhilarating reading.

The starting of competitions and the giving of prizes is by no means confined to the advertisers. A number of these novelettes themselves seek to en-

hance their charms by similar expedients. "Fifty golden sovereigns" are weekly distributed from one publishing office to certain fortunate applicants, while elsewhere the largest collection of old postage-stamps will triumphantly carry off a £60 piano. Teapots, fur collars, and rings set with precious stones are among the rewards to be obtained—on terms. The prize-list of a latter-day golf club, with its claret-jugs, aneroids, and inkstands, is scarce more comprehensive than the catalogue of inducements to would-be subscribers. It may be presumed that their potency is sufficiently proved to justify their continuance, for it must be clearly understood that no want of confidence in the attractiveness of his periodical proper drives the proprietor to make use of them. On the contrary, he has no scruple in assuring you that this tale is "enthalling," and that one "splendid," though, of course, neither so enthalling nor so splendid as the one which is to commence in our next. Now is the time, in fact, to subscribe! "Sister Clare" (which is No. 174 of "Thrilling Life Stories for the Masses," and is the offspring of Mrs. J. B. Horton's muse) announces the name of her successor, and adds a word of exhortation: "Be sure to secure and read the above-mentioned story, and also its former sequels, for you will find that every chapter abounds with absorbing interest." "Sister Clare" is right. Any chapter of so comparatively rare a thing as a former sequel must be well worth seeing. But there is a plainness of speech—a majestic candor—about "The London Story Paper" which none of its would-be rivals need hope to match. It bids us "please remember that Miss Laura Jean Libby writes exclusively for this paper," and on turn-inge feverishly to "Madcap Laddy the Flirt; or, the Favorite of the Beaux," which proceeds from her pen, we find that lady described as "the greatest liv-

ing novelist, whose stories no author has ever been able to equal, and whose fame, as the favorite writer of the people, has never been surpassed." Whaur's your Mavis Clare noo? And is it possible that the Isle of Man stands where it did? There is no resisting such trenchant simplicity of utterance. Compared with it, the most solemn warnings against the machinations of news agents and bookstall clerks seem poor and humdrum devices for attracting public patronage.

To "elevate" other people "in the social scale" (one of the most pleasing phrases in our language) is an aim and an ideal with which we are all familiar. The process of elevation has been applied indifferently to the actor and the artisan. Perhaps some day it will be applied to the author, though 'tis a herculean task which even Sir Walter Besant might shrink from. But, in the meantime, we may secretly congratulate ourselves upon the certainty that, on entering the world of the novelette, we shall be introduced to the finest of fine company. Peers, even dukes, are not uncommon; baronets may be met with in abundance; while there is a rich profusion of the landed gentry and her Majesty's officers. With those exalted beings and their womankind the inhabitants of "the Vicarage" are permitted to associate on a footing of practical equality; but below them there yawns a vast gulf, inhabited only by a few stray family solicitors, the further side of which is bounded by the abodes of horse-copers and other gangrel bodies, who are up to every sort of villany. It is true that in the number of "Horner's Penny Stories" to which we have already referred, we dwell with artisans, of whom one is "a study and type in himself—the ideal of the true-hearted British workman." But that is an exception to the general rule, and in the rare cases in which the heroine's female

friend has been cradled in poverty, she invariably marries some one whose wealth and influence make it possible for her "to mix with the most exclusive people, and to enter the sacred inner circle of the world of fashion." "Stay, Phyllis," peremptorily exclaims one such desirable husband to his spouse, "not a word. If you ever wish to grieve me, make mention of your humble birth." Generally speaking, the good characters are born in the purple, though for a brief space they may be "kep' out of their rights," like the Tichborne claimant. The appropriate residence for them is a palatial mansion standing in a handsome park; a house with broad, tessellated halls, "the home of old oak and the warlike relics of mediæval ages;" a house with "embattled brick walls and white stone battlements," and with square towers at several points to add to the strength of the place. They possess, or are entitled to possess, fine family estates, and probably an obliging uncle will leave them a half share in a flourishing private bank—"another Coutts', in fact." With so many "accumulated doubloons" at command (we should have thought sovereigns the more convenient currency on the whole), they not unnaturally find "habilliments" preferable to mere clothes, and "vacate their sphere" instead of dying. Their standard of refinement in speech is singularly lofty. Granted that every one of them says, "Whatever is the matter?" Granted that one hero, when his health is inquired after, replies carelessly, "I haven't been over special the past month." Such relapses into the plebeian idiom are more than atoned for by the writer in "The Family Herald Supplement," who attributes to one of her characters "unconscious vulgarity" because the poor fellow had opined that two hundred a-year was "not to be sneezed at." High-born as these personages are, they are not in-

capable of the most liberal sentiments. "In my short life," exclaims one young lady, "I have met with people who had not a drop of what we call blue blood in their veins, yet who were as refined and well bred as many a descendant of a noble line." The generosity of this admission is considerably heightened by the preceding words: "Yes, like yourself, I am of a good old family." Perhaps the most insufferably genteel story of the whole bunch is "Aunt Lizzie's Matchmaking" in Miss Swan's penny series. We pause to congratulate its author, Miss G. B. Stuart, on the success with which she has caught the exact tone of Miss Swan's writings. The pupil has reproduced her mistress' unique combination of well-to-do piety and worldly prudence with astonishing fidelity. "As she is a lady by birth, she will always be held a lady by her equals;" "the young lady evidently recognized from my voice that I was of her own class;" and so forth. Is not the inspiration unmistakable? "D——n anything that's low" is a capital motto. Though one be obligated, like Tony Lumpkin's friend, to dance a bear, the animal may legitimately be restricted to "Water Parted" or "The Minuet in Ariadne." But the thing may be overdone, and even the word "lady" is apt to pall with repetition.

The heroines of the class of fiction we are discussing may be divided into two sections. There are the school-girls in short skirts and with hair hanging down their backs. Very little will presently transform them into "imperial" women. But the majority are fully grown up from the very start. You may recognize them for what they are by their shapely or well-poised heads, with little tendrils of hair waving about the forehead; by their firmly chiselled lips, their mobile mouths, their sweeping eyelashes, their creamy complexions, and their willowy figures.

They are, in short, "the divinest creatures that ever came fresh from Nature's choicest mould," and we cannot wonder that they become "leaders in county society." They speak dreamily, and every now and then a little wistfulness creeps into their voices, what time the lids droop wearily over the soft gray eyes. They are "as innocent and good as they are winsome," but they can take uncommonly good care of themselves. For nearly every one of them has a decided touch of hauteur, and can gaze at a presumptuous person with that "calm scrutiny" which has "so often nonplussed impressionable youth." If this species of glance falls to wither, it can be followed up by tones that are coldly cutting or have a ring of defiance. A notable race of women, in good sooth. Their principal shortcoming is a strong tendency to suspect their *flancés* of the blackest treachery or the foulest crime, on grounds that would not justify the drowning of a mouse. To be sure, were it not for this foible, where would our penny novelette be? Yet, if only for the change, we welcome the lady who is "true to the core," and who thus receives the news that her lover has been arrested on a charge of murder: "Peace, sir! Speak not of Edward Harris thus to me! I know his faults, and I know his virtues. I know, for my heart tells me, that he is innocent!" Encore, encore! Good old Edward Harris!

It is distressing to turn from such a model of constancy and virtue to the female villains, who, we can promise our readers, are the most abandoned hussies. You can tell them from a distance by their hair of raven blackness, and by their dusky cheeks, tinted with vivid carmine. They look like beautiful demons, and their speech bewrayeth them, for, depend upon it, no really good woman habitually uses the expletive "Bah!" Jealousy is the one

characteristic they have in common with the heroines. They think nothing of making love to the hero in the most brazen-faced manner, and when he coolly rejects their proffered affection, this sort of thing happens: "Slowly she raised herself until she stood before him in all her majestic beauty; then she hissed rather than spoke, 'You have despised my love; henceforth you shall know what my hatred means.'" In spite of the march of intellect, the *spretæ injuria formæ* seems still to be a recognized spring of conduct.

Turn we now to the heroes who, it is good to be able to record, are in every respect worthy of the heroines. They are not, it may be, so radiantly beautiful. Nevertheless, they are "pleasant and presentable specimens of English manhood," and "splendid types of the true-born English gentleman." What more could the most exacting demand? Their eyes are full of lazy good-humor, and they have a sort of quiet, devil-may-care expression about the lines of the mouth and chin. But we should not care to take a liberty with them, for, as the following fragment of conversation will indicate, they can be very stiff and haughty upon occasion. The hero, it must be premised, has just announced the death of Lord Straithland to Captain Carton.

"Then you are his heir?" asked Captain Carton.

"As far as I know."

"Permit me, my lord, to shake hands with you."

"Wait," said Philip Beralinger, "until I am sure of my position. If I am the undisputed heir, I shall certainly sociably wake up the old castle, and I hope to receive you as my guest."

Captain Carton was very effusive in his answer, but he ventured no longer to be familiar. There was the peculiar, indefinite stand-offishness of the aristocrat visible in the bearing of Philip Beralinger. It was not that he was less genial, but he had fallen back into the

position of a casual acquaintance of superior birth.

We must give our gallant friends the credit of carrying their *nonchalance* to great lengths. "You are not, perhaps, aware," Sir Devereux Drumstick, the wicked guardian, will hiss, "that her [the heroine's] mother, after drowning her eldest son and poisoning her first husband, was married to her own grandfather, thereby forfeiting all her rights as next of kin of her husband." "I had heard something of the sort," will be the placid rejoinder of Pierrepont Pynlon, or Herbert Hardress, or Rosslyn Cheyne, or Herbert Dering ("or, to cede him his proper title, Sir Herbert Dering"). Why his proper title should be withheld, we cannot imagine. Fortified by this *sangfroid*, our heroes boldly proceed upon their way, and, after vanquishing unheard-of obstacles, and running unheard-of risks, finally achieve the object for which they were created. That object is twofold. In the first place, they have to "win" the heroine; "win" is the technical word. In the second place, they have to "claim" her from her parents or guardians—"claim," also, being a term of art. Sometimes the order is reversed, and the first step is to approach the parent or guardian with a request for "permission to seek So-and-so's hand in marriage." The winning, in such a case, comes after the claiming. But, whatever the course of procedure, great and permanent happiness is the result of the union. It should in justice be added that all parties display an almost excessive delicacy in regard to money matters. They detest all paltriness, and plight their troth to one another readily enough when neither has a farthing in the world. It is the subsequent accession of either or both to a princely fortune which alone threatens to break off the engagement. Luckily, these nice scruples are overcome in

the long run, and two meritorious and charming creatures are rendered happy.

Life would be comparatively plain sailing if it were as easy to detect villains in reality as it is in fiction. Their very manner of speaking would furnish a clue. "Hissing" and "muttering" would be much more popular with them than the more generally accepted methods of bringing out the voice. If you heard a man at a ball or anywhere else apostrophizing a lady as "my beautiful one, my queen, my goddess," or the like, you would know that he was all right. But if, on the other hand, you overheard him addressing her as "my proud, dainty lady," or exclaiming, with a bitter curse upon his lips, "I have caged you at last, my lady bird," you would have a shrewd suspicion that he was emphatically a "wrong 'un." Suspicion would grow stronger if he called his rival a "miserable, under-handed serpent," or showed any signs of possessing the instinct of a sleuth-hound. Suspicion would become certainty if you happened to discover that he "held a leading position in a fast set," and further confirmation would be supplied by a glance at his handsome, evil face, and the cruel gleam in his splendid dark eyes. A villain may be a foreigner answering to some such highly characteristic and euphonious name as "Count Achard Bungener," but he is very seldom allowed blue eyes. That agreeable hue seems to lend itself less readily than any other to the manifestation of concentrated hatred and malignity, and to be much less capable of assuming an absolutely murderous expression. Perhaps the most fearsome thing about the villains is their diabolical sneer. He must be brave, indeed, who could face an interview with the gentleman of whom we read that "his dark eye beamed with haughty and passionate fire, mingled

with a sinister gleam which, added to the disdainful curl of the lip, gave to his face an expression akin to treachery." A little more than kin, we should have thought, as well as a good deal less than kind. It is in vain that the villains dissemble. We know that, despite their pretended benevolence, they are hatching the most preposterous plots ever dreamt of outside of Bedlam, to pay off scores of thirty years' standing. "I believe," says one villain to the girl destined, by no wish of her own, for his bride—"I believe that engaged people indulge in little pleasantries which I confess would be very agreeable to me, but I will exact absolutely nothing until you are my wife." We feel instinctively that this affected moderation is but a cloak to cover the most dastardly designs, and we dread him all the more for his hypocrisy. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*, if we may poach on Mr. Birrell's preserves. Happily, even villany must have a period, and conscience must reassert its prerogatives. At some random word or chance allusion, our scoundrel's face blanches, or even turns a ghastly, greenish white. He will brazen it out for a moment, but the evidence instantly forthcoming will be overwhelming. His accomplices will blow the gaff (our readers will please excuse the vulgarity of the expression). "Here is your revolver," they will say; "the cartridge, etc., is the same number as those not discharged." If he be well-advised the villain will anticipate the gallows, and will forthwith drop down dead—a victim, not, like the Templar, to the violence of his own contending passions, but to heart disease. So, at all events, will the symptoms be diagnosed, without the slightest examination, by a doctor, who will opportunely appear upon the scene with all the appetite of a Greek chorus for imparting superfluous information.

Love is an element which is never missing from the pages of the novellette. 'Tis love that makes the world go round, as everybody is aware; and 'tis love that assists the circulation of cheap fiction as well. Sensation is an equally essential ingredient. Titles like "The Voice of Blood," "The Kiss of Judas," "The Bracelet of Death," tell their own tale; and, though they are the exception rather than the rule, a strong spice of crime seems to be regarded as a *sine quâ non*. We cannot truthfully assert that there is much variety in the plots. They might, perhaps, delight the rigid Aristotelian, for they have plenty of *ἀναισθησία* and plenty of *περιπέτεια* (we can be as pedantic as another, when we choose). But there is a good deal of sameness in the devices by which the knot is disentangled and the catastrophe finally brought about. Nine times out of ten the schemes of the villain are frustrated by making some well-conditioned character play the eavesdropper. "Never postpone business," was the maxim which Mr. Squeers sought to impress upon Master Belling; and villains would do well to take it to heart. If they would only strike while the iron is hot, matters would go hard with the heroine and her lover. But, instead of settling the matter out of hand, they bid the partners of their wickedness meet them to-morrow night at the wicket-gate which leads into the coppice; and, sure enough, when to-morrow night comes, some sharp-eared third party happens to be in the vicinity of the trysting-place, and learns everything. Disguises are freely worn; wigs, masks, and false noses are not despised. Letters and other documents are forged with marvellous ease, and with at least temporary success. Blackmail is levied with punctuality and despatch. *N. B.*—Accounts rendered quarterly. The interest of the fable, moreover, depends in large meas-

ure upon the peculiar system of jurisprudence which prevails in this department of the realm of fiction. The law of the domestic relations is one with which civilized nations are unfamiliar. One old and respected friend among the legal doctrines of the novelist is sure to turn up. "A few careless words made us unwittingly husband and wife, according to Scotch law." What says the "Old Contributor" in his inimitable "Tourists' Matrimonial Guide through Scotland?"—

This maxim itself might content ye,

That marriage is made—by consent;
Provided it's done *de præsenti*,
And marriage is really what's meant.

The law of guardian and ward also presents some highly novel and startling features. Probably it is in questions of succession, however, that the knowledge and resource of the penny novel-writer shine most brilliantly. He is conversant with principles which have come with something of a shock to Mr. Jarman, and of which Lord M'Laren would appear to be wholly ignorant. In interpreting a will, for example, the testator's intention is the last and least consideration, and what ultimately rules is the intention of the beneficiary's guardian, especially if he be a baronet. This is less surprising in view of the absolutely imbecile testamentary dispositions which the testators are in the habit of making, and of their fondness for imposing upon a bequest impossible conditions which they provide no machinery for making effectual. When people leave no will, the law distributes their estates in a manner fully as eccentric as any private individual could desire. Let a committee of authors at once be elected to draw up "A Treatise on the Law of Intestate succession in Heritage and Moveables, with a Glance at the various meanings of the words 'heir' and 'next-of-kin.'" We confidently predict

that it would awaken feelings of the liveliest curiosity throughout the legal profession.

We have endeavored to reap a little innocent, and, we trust, not ill-natured, diversion from a class of publication which, to the vast majority of "Maga's" readers, must hitherto have been no more than a name. But the subject has its serious side, and after a protracted study of two-and-a-half dozen specimens of this kind of writing, we feel as heavily depressed and as much in tune for solemn and gloomy reflection as if we had just read the last number of "L*t*r*t*re" from beginning to end. The very bulk of the penny novels is appalling. The thought that, week after week, this mass of printed matter is poured forth from the press and greedily absorbed by the public, takes away one's breath. Do readers never weary? Can the taste for trash never be sated? It is of no use to pretend that it is *not* trash. In all these performances we have detected not one touch of originality, not one spark of genuine humor, not one trace of observation, not one attempt at drawing character. Of the best of them—"The Family Herald Supplement," to wit—no more can be said than that it is commendably free from bad taste, absurdity and extravagance. It excels because of negative, rather than of positive, virtues. The writers, too—what of them? Would not the treadmill or the galleys be preferable to the task of regularly turning out a given quantity of the same tedious stuff without intermission and without relief? *They*, poor people, are not interviewed; *their* portraits do not glare at you from the literary journals; *they* are not clients of the prosperous literary agent; *they* do not entertain one another at public feasts. Grub Street depopulated, or pulled down? Not a bit of it; only, the most irascible even of our geniuses have learned to ignore its existence.

Yet, inevitable as are such sombre thoughts, they yield before long to more cheerful considerations. The plain English of it is that these penny novelettes are not, by a long way, so bad as they might be. Objections may be urged against them by the score. It may be said that, like contemporary melodrama, they perpetuate an unwholesome and now threadbare tradition, inherited from the Byron of "The Giaour" and "Lara," through Lord Lytton at his very worst and Ouida at her second best. It may be said that their "outlook upon life" (in the cant phrase) is distorted and *borné*. It may be said that they deal with aspirations that grovel rather than soar, and that the ideals they disclose are very far from being elevated. Doubtless, they reflect with tolerable accuracy the philosophy of their *clientèle*. To marry the man you love and to have plenty of money, honestly come by, *bien entendu*, are the capital ends of human existence which that philosophy implies. Are they widely dissimilar from the ends consciously or unconsciously aimed at by those who procure their novels from the circulating libraries? Here, at all events, is no palliating of guilty passion. Here are no polite

sophistries to extenuate conjugal infidelity. On the contrary, the libertine is held up to just reprobation and odium. The family is, after all, the basis of society as at present constituted. Without its support private property would lack its surest foundation. And as long as to be happily married and to "get on in the world" are the secret or avowed ideals of what are called, for convenience' sake, the working classes, so long will any dangerous and far-reaching scheme of communism remain an impossibility. The penny stories are wretched things enough, absolutely speaking. But it is infinitely better that the wives and daughters of our shopmen and our mechanics should spend their spare copers upon them, than that, like their "betters," they should dabble in, and profess to admire, the pedantic obscenities of an Ibsen, the unintelligible nonsense of a Maeterlinck, or the dubious rodomontade of a Ruskin. Let us be thankful for small mercies; let us remember the cheap, popular literature of France and its abominations; and if the kirk be ower muckle, let us e'en be content with a good grace to sing mass in the quire.

Blackwood's Magazine.

MARGARET EMMA HENLEY.

(1888—1894.)

When you wake in your crib,
 You, an inch of experience,
 Vaulted about
 With the wonder of darkness;
 Walling and striving
 To reach from your feebleness
 Something you feel
 Will be good to and cherish you,
 Something you know

Trader Ellison.

And can rest upon blindly;
 O, then a hand
 (Your mother's, your mother's!)
 By the fall of its fingers
 All knowledge, all power to you,
 Out of the dreary,
 Discouraging strangenesses
 Comes to and masters you,
 Takes you, and lovingly
 Woos and soothes you
 Back, as you cling to it,
 Back to some comforting
 Corner of sleep.
 So you wake in your bed,
 Having lived, having loved;
 But the shadows are there,
 And the world and its kingdoms
 Incredibly faded;
 And you grope through the Terror
 Above you and under
 For the light, for the warmth,
 The assurance of life;
 But the blasts are ice-born,
 And your heart is nigh burst
 With the weight of the gloom
 And the stress of your strangled
 And desperate endeavor;
 Sudden a hand—
 Mother, O Mother!—
 God at His best to you,
 Out of the roaring,
 Impossible silences,
 Falls on and urges you,
 Mightily, tenderly,
 Forth, as you clutch at it,
 Forth to the infinite
 Peace of the Grave.

W. E. Henley.

TRADER ELLISON.

(A STORY OF SIERRA LEONE.)

Some years ago, when the tide of heathen villages behind the colony of
 Moslem influence, which for several Sierra Leone, a white man sat, with
 centuries has been steadily flowing an anxious face, on the veranda of a
 southwards across a vast tract of little factory in a turbulent native
 Western Africa, first touched the town. Even to-day, though it now

possesses a resident official and a detachment of armed constabulary who keep such order as they can, while the European traders who occasionally visit there may come and go in safety, Kabunda is not a desirable place. A tangled forest of cotton-woods hems it in like a wall; a breadth of muddy water slides past the gate of the stockade; and between the river and forest there lies a waste of reeking swamp whose exhalations poison the listless air. Then it was a dark place of fetish cruelty, and the first white man who had endeavored to open trade with its priest-ridden inhabitants bitterly regretted his folly as he sat there on that steamy evening.

Trader Ellison was a broad-shouldered, resolute man, well versed in the native ways, which are always devious and sometimes dangerous. How he came there is a simple story, and the story is also true, for in a region of bloodshed and pestilence like much of Western Africa, the grim realities of every-day life are stranger than romance. Ellison first arrived in the colony as assistant in a certain coast-wise factory with an extensive native trade. The agent soon died of fever, as most of the agents do, and the assistant managed the factory to everybody's satisfaction. His commission on the gross earnings steadily mounted up, and he let it stand to his credit on the books of the firm at home, for he was to return and be married when his contract had expired. Then he made an adventurous journey into a dangerous district on the fringe of the debatable land, and returned, broken down by fever, with the finest canoe-train of merchandise which had ever descended that stream. The venture had been successful, and he trusted that with what he had saved and its proceeds there would be enough to commence business with on his own account at home; but good fortune

seldom lasts very long in West Africa.

Thus, when one sweltering morning he reached the factory, he found a stranger in charge, who informed him that the firm had failed through outside speculation, and that he was there to save what he could for the creditors' benefit. Ellison set his teeth as he listened, feeling curiously numb and sick; but he was a man of action, and shaking off the weakness, went round the different factories. One result of a good reputation was that he found men willing to trust him with sufficient cloth and gin to make a second venture; after which he sat all night with a haggard face, writing and re-writing a letter to the woman who waited at home, in which, as a ruined man, he set her free from the promise she had made. Then, in spite of official warnings, he went back into the bush, and after many days' journey, reached Kabunda town. How, far apart from any civilized help and often sick of malaria, he fought a single-handed battle against the fetish priests' hatred and the headman's duplicity, has nothing to do with this story; and such things are not uncommon in the fever-land. But his business grew, for the negro is a trader born, until again there was trouble, and Ellison could only foresee disaster, as he wondered what the end would be.

A lurid crimson glare still shone behind the palms whose feathery tufts rose against it black as ebony, though the mist, rolling up like steam from the river, hid all the dripping swamp, and lights twinkled among the clustering huts as the tropic night closed down. Beneath his feet, for, as usual, the dwelling was raised on piles, a group of tattooed Krooboys crouched in the hot dust of the compound, whispering apprehensively and fingering their freshly-ground matchets, while a heavy revolver lay near the trader's

hand. Ellison felt very thankful that he had brought these Liberians with him into the bush, because there exists a fierce racial hatred between the West African tribes, and he knew that they would fight, to save their skin, if not for the factory. Beyond the timber stockade, which he had strengthened with galvanized sheets, a dingy column of scented smoke rolled across the mud-walled huts, and Ellison watched it vacantly while he waited for the outcome of the palaver that was going on in the judgment-square.

Two turbaned merchants, representatives of the Moslem soldier-traders who dwell in a state of at least partial civilization beyond the fever-belt, had twice already visited him to sell their beautiful leather-work. At last, encouraged by his fetish counsellors and tempted by avarice, the headman had laid violent hands upon their goods, and that night their fate was to be decided in the palaver-square. Ellison's friendly warning was received with hostility; and the headman had hinted that his people, maddened by tumbo wine, might not be contented with slaying two foreigners or burning a factory. Ellison realized the danger, but that factory was the last hope to which he clung, and he resolved there should at least be a struggle before it was taken from him by half-naked savages.

Presently a roar of voices broke through the sweltering night, and the trader leaned over the balustrade listening eagerly, for he recognized a note of murderous fury in that negro cry. Then he heard the ringing crack of a long Arab gun, the sputtering crash of a flintlock, and a wild howl of anger from the crowd. A crescent moon, slowly sinking towards the western palms, cast a faint light on the stretch of white sand fringed with acacias that led to the palaver-square.

Watching it intently, Ellison saw three indistinct figures speeding down the avenue. "The fools," he muttered, clenching his fist, "the besotted imbeciles, to meddle with men like these, and bring a legion of Moslem fanatics to burn this hole to the ground!" By their height and the loose folds of cotton that fluttered behind their limbs he recognized that these three were men from the interior, as grim a race of warriors as any in the world. A yelling mob streamined after them, with one or two naked runners shooting ahead of the rest. Presently the last of the fugitives sharply wheeled about, and there was a twinkling gleam in the moonlight as a long-barrelled gun went up. A train of red sparks spat from it, and the foremost runner fell, clawing at the sand, while a roar for vengeance drowned the jarring report.

"Good practice!" said Ellison, grimly; "Hallo! what has happened now?"

One of the running figures staggered in its stride, then, seized by a comrade who halted, went limping on again, while the gap between them and the mob narrowed rapidly as they neared the factory-gate. For a moment Ellison ground his heels into the planks; then he sprang down the veranda stairway with a settled purpose in hand. These men had visited Kabunda at his request to trade, and he could not see them murdered before his eyes.

"Open the gate!" he shouted to the excited Krooboys. "Three of you stand behind it, and the rest follow me with the matchet. You needn't be afraid of hurting them; see that none get inside."

The little grizzled leader, Old Man Trouble by name, showed his filed teeth as he said something to the rest, and again Ellison felt glad that he had engaged only wild Cavally boys, who, when amusement was needed in their

distant country, made war on the Liberian Republic and the German factories. Without hesitation, they swung back the compound-gate, and the white man stood in the opening with a revolver in his hand, hoping to settle the matter without shooting, if he could. He was only just in time. Three men faced round outside the gate as the black wave caught them up, and Ellison spied the glimmer of the finely tempered straight-bladed swords which are made by Arab craftsmen far away in the north. Then a staggering figure reeled past him towards the open gate, and he was in the midst of a confused scuffle, striking furiously with the revolver-butt, while matchets flashed about him and a man in loose blue cotton swept clear a semicircle with an Arab sword. Next, a gun-stock, or something heavy, came down upon his head, and half-stunned he yet remembered grasping the shoulders of one of the strangers who was also beaten down, and shouting for help to a Krooboy close beside. Panting, they dragged him backwards, while a snaky sword-blade circled above their heads, and a wedge of yelling Krooboys momentarily checked the crowd. Presently the Krooman fell upon him, cannoned off, and was trampled on; somebody came to help him, and with a gasp of fervent gratitude Ellison and his burden reeled together through the gate. The barrier clanged to in the face of the furious mob, and the white man leaned against it, panting hard for breath, and trying to shut out the sickening sounds that came from the other side.

Lifting the crushed wreck of the sun-helmet from his head, and wiping the sweat from his eyes, he saw that a Krooboy was missing, while of the three fugitives, but one had passed the gate. The latter sat in the dust of the compound, a tall man wearing the blue country cloth that is woven in the

interior, coolly tying a bandage round his wounded leg.

"Greeting and thanks, but little peace, white man," he said in the semi-Arabic idiom spoken in the north; and Ellison, who understood, smiled as he noted the variation from the Mahomedan salutation, "Greeting and peace." Then the stranger continued calmly, and Ellison, listening to his story, gathered at least the gist of it. They had fought their way out of the palaversquare, and, while two of his retainers had been murdered outside the gate, a comrade, he trusted, had reached the river safe. Another ruled a Suli-ma village whose cattle-raiding inhabitants were devout followers of the Prophet, and, if the fugitive reached it, he promised that there should be a very grim reckoning for the blood that had been spilled. "I am in your hands now, white man," he concluded, "What will you do with me?"

Ellison rubbed his forehead, which commenced to throb painfully, and found a deep gash across it, while his jacket was torn to rags. With a rueful glance at the latter, he broke out in English, "Confound you, you ebony nuisance, for dragging me into this;" then, noticing the other's bewildered stare, explained as best he could, that they must try to hold the factory until his friends should come. Next, expecting that the crowd, which, satisfied with bloodshed, had dispersed, would probably return again, he served out to the Krooboys an ample supply of powder and four-foot flintlock guns from the trade-store, and bade the cook, who had done great things with the matchet, prepare the best meal he could.

The big man, whose wound did not appear to affect his appetite, performed some mystic ceremony with a pinch of salt, which Ellison understood to mean that he graciously took that

place under his protection, and then ate like a hungry wolf, while the trader, lounging in a monkey-skin chair, with one eye on the village, watched him attentively. His face was not black, but swarthy, while something in the features and the angle of his forehead showed that other blood than the negro's flowed in his veins, and that he came of a people far removed from savages. The village was now almost ominously silent, and the twinkling lights had gone, though at irregular intervals a growl of distant voices rose across the huts. But neither of the two strangely assorted companions were to enjoy that meal in peace, for presently a tattooed heathen drew cautiously near the gate, and laying down the inevitable present, a string of live fowls tied together by the leg, called out that he bore a message from the headman.

"Speak on," was the answer. The negro commenced by setting forth Ellison's ungrateful wickedness, after which he concluded: "So my master sends warning his people will certainly kill you soon. Therefore, tie that stranger and put him outside the gate; leave us the factory and Krooboy; and he will see a canoe is ready a little before the dawn, and no one shall watch by the river while you escape down stream."

Ellison laughed at the message, and his answer was very brief. "Go back," he said, "and tell your master, if he desires this factory, to take it,—when he can." Thereupon, the other, changing his tactics, depicted with graphic details what the whole party's fate would be. Ellison, considering this was not only exceeding a herald's privilege, but also calculated to weaken his followers' resolution, if they understood, sternly bade the messenger go away. But the negro only waxed the more eloquent, until a deftly-aimed bottle, snatched from the table at

hand, smote him full on the forehead, and cut the oration short.

A grim smile twinkled in the stranger's eyes. "That answer," he said, "was given well; therefore, if Allah wills it, we shall hold this place together until my kinsmen come. The white man is surely of a soldier-race, and I fought with Samadu."

"No," was Ellison's answer, in what he knew of the inland Arabic. "I am only a trader, and sell cloth that from the profits I may have bread to eat; but this factory is my living, and I will not give it up."

"Ah," said the other, still smiling. "Then it is not strange that the great Emir Samadus should fear the white infidel. I would leave those fowls outside the gate; we shall see if the bushman's poisons are good for the big red ants." Presently, with the explanation that he had not closed his eyes for several nights, the Moslem stretched himself on a roll of matting, and sank into heavy sleep, while Ellison kept watch upon the veranda.

The village was now apparently wrapped in drunken slumber, for tumbo wine had freely flowed at the palaver. The palm-fronds rustled mysteriously along the forest's edge; drops of condensed moisture fell splashing from the eaves; and the oily gurgle of the river came softly through the gloom. All these things Ellison noted as he listened, revolver in hand, while the sweltering hours of the tropic night dragged themselves away, until dawn found him leaning wearily over the balustrade, drenched in heavy dew.

The week that followed was a trying one to all in the factory. A second attack was beaten off by the Krooboy's gallantry, for the woolly-haired laborers had no desire to pose as an offering to the fetish gods. But provisions were nearly exhausted, and soon the little garrison were reduced to one

yam apiece each day, and through lack of water Ellison, to his great disgust, was compelled to resort to curious effervescents and poisonous Hamburg gin from his stock in trade. The tribesmen now contented themselves with trying to starve them out, though it had already become evident they had other business in hand. Ellison could see messengers coming and going all day, while slaves were piling branches about the stockade. At this, as they watched one afternoon, the stranger smiled significantly. "My people come," he said. "Do the heathen think them children to be turned aside by these? Soon you will see them driven like a flock of frightened sheep."

"That's if we don't starve beforehand," Ellison answered, in English. "I feel nearly half-dead now. Ah! there's the bushman's artillery on the way to the front."

A line of panting, naked negroes were hauling along the river-bank one of those honey-combed, cast-iron guns, which, in spite of the Treaty of Brussels, may be found in every West African stronghold. Presently it was lashed to a heavy log, and an individual, gorgeously attired in a crownless silk hat painted with crimson bands, a discarded infantry tunic, and nothing else, strutted some sixty yards ahead of it and set up a wand in the oozy mire. He fastened a screaming parrot upon the wand, and returned to where his subordinates were busy cramming the gun to the muzzle with fragments of gin-bottles and broken iron. Next, mounting a pair of trade-spectacles (which are made of window-glass), he crawled round about the breach, shouting vociferous orders, until there was a sudden dispersal of the naked artillerymen; a long, bright flash leapt from the muzzle as it tilted aloft, a rolling cloud of yellow smoke closed down across the swamp, and as this drifted away a triumphant howl

went up, for there were no traces of the parrot or of the wand it had perched upon.

The bushman, having thus ascertained the range, set up another wand in its place, and then squatted down among the undergrowth beside his hidden gun until the unsuspecting foe should pass across that mark, which is the usual artillery practice of the West African, and not always ineffectual, as the Alecto's blue-jackets know.

Afterwards, and until long past midnight, the two men of widely different race watched and waited together upon the veranda. Both of them were very hungry, and the one of swarthy color had tasted no liquid for nearly two days, because the fiery potato-spirit was forbidden to him. He leaned on the worm-eaten balustrade, a silent, statuesque figure, loosely draped in blue, for in him the inherent apathy of the negro was blended with the teaching of Islam that no man may escape his fate. But Ellison's Western energy chafed under the inaction, and with his belt drawn tight about him he paced feverishly to and fro, only halting a moment to fling, with a savage gesture, a damp cigar over the rail. The little glowing morsel lay a red spark in the dust below, and led his gaze to the few scattered figures fingering their long guns behind the pallsade. "It would be better to go out and meet them," he said, turning to his companion, "than starve here like rats in a trap. You don't understand, confound it! I'm always forgetting that." Then in a few broken sentences, he made his meaning clear.

"My friends are surely coming," was the grave reply. "Only wait for daylight, and then, if there is no deliverance, we will go out and make an end."

Ellison did not answer, but vaguely wondered, as he stared out into the night, whether one who had hung upon his arm that English summer evening,

which seemed so long ago, had forgotten his existence, or if she still waited in patience for his return, while he was about to perish far away in Africa. Then his thoughts went back to the home-land which he never expected to see again, until a confused pounding of monkey-skin drums recalled him rudely to the present, and he saw a long line of naked tribesmen march out through the stockade gate. With a throat dry as a limekiln he paced the creaking veranda until his swarthy companion touched him, and pointed to where, beyond the misty forest, a faint grayness streaked the East. Then, haggard and anxious, he cast himself down upon a fiber-mat, and lay there while the stars faded and went out one by one, wondering if that was the last sunrise that he was fated to see.

At last, from somewhere among the cotton-woods, there came a ringing detonation,—the clang of an Arab gun. His comrade cried out triumphantly, and it was evident that the Kabunda men knew what the warning meant. A blowing of horns and a booming of drums rolled along the river, and watcher answered watcher out of the drifting mist. A silence followed that was strangely trying, while the gray changed to crimson, for day comes suddenly in the tropics, and presently a huge coppery red disc swung up above the forest. Then, as the first hot rays fell on the reeking swamp and drove bright lanes of radiance into the forest-shade, the mist, gathering in fantastic wreaths, melted into thin air, and Ellison saw lines of blue and white clad figures swarming among the cotton-woods. Next, from the brushwood by the river and the tall grass of the swamp, there flickered yellow flashes, puffs of pale blue vapor hung in motionless streaks, and a crash of guns shook the dew-drenched palms. But neither shot nor shout brought answer from the strag-

gling line of white and black, which with a shimmer of spears before it, and a glint of long-barrelled guns, poured doggedly into the swamp. Ellison, watching through his glasses, saw that the most part were fighting men from the north, probably Sofa and Sulima Moslem, who were already extending their domination over a heathen land, while by the neatly folded turbans and lighter color of limb, he knew there were among them some of Samadu's Arabs from beyond the peaks of Kong.

A second burst of firing, heavier than before, broke out along the river; the running figures massed themselves together, and this time a shrill, piercing yell, which even to-day the West Indian patrols do not care to hear, echoed across the tangled grass, and there followed a mad rattle of gunshots across the breadth of the swamp. Ellison fixed his glasses on the mass of half-naked tribesmen crouching among the undergrowth where the bulk of the Kabunda people lay behind the gun, which, hidden from their assailants, commanded the one firm passage leading through the mire. At that moment a whirling crimson flash blazed forth among the grass, and a cloud of vapor drove across the line of leaping objects that seemed suddenly cut in two. A wild shout pealed through the thunder of the over-loaded gun; a hand grasped his shoulder and a deep voice said in his ear, "Now you shall see our people fight."

Ellison held his breath as he watched the mad struggle to re-load the gun in time, and the reckless rush of spear-armed warriors straight upon the piece, beginning to understand how it was that those swarthy tribesmen had more than once chased battalions of drilled negroes, strengthened by picked white soldiers of France, through the forests of Senegal. Even then he could see a fantastic object

flinging the priming upon the breach, and in a few moments more he knew the murderous load of ragged iron would blot the foremost out; but with a glitter of steel above them the men from the fringe of the Soudan charged home upon the gun. Into the grass, and through it, with the flintlocks scorching their faces and the iron shower hurtling broadcast, they drove resistlessly through and over the mass of Kabunda men. When they came forth a terror-stricken crowd of fugitives fled down the river-bank, flinging flintlock and matchet from them as they ran, while the sword-blades flickered behind them, and pursuer and pursued swept on waist-deep together through the shallow ford. Further down the river, and higher up as well, the same thing happened, while now there was a ringing of long-barrelled guns upon the other side, and Ellison yelled excitedly, "Hurrah, a splendid charge! They'll wipe out all Kabunda unless the gate is closed in time!"

The barrier swung to in the faces of friends and foes alike, but a mixed mass of blue and white cotton draperies, black limbs, and matchet-blades, rolled up out of the river, and swarmed shoulder to shoulder across the big stockade, while the gun-butts clanged like a foundry as they rang upon the gate. The gate went down before them; there were yells and cries in the streets, and a confused flashing of fire-arms among the clustering huts, while with a shout of, "Come back there, you lunatics, this isn't our affair!" Ellison dropped from the roof, and sprang down the veranda stair.

He was too late. The gate of the factory compound was already open wide, and he saw the last of his woolly-haired followers, fired by the lust of plunder, vanish among the trees, while presently his swarthy friend limped past him with a matchet in his hand, and Ellison struggled fiercely to choke

down an almost uncontrollable impulse to join in the fray. In a moment the acacia-fringed avenue was filled with a roaring mob, some standing at bay about the huts, the rest running like frightened sheep, while turbaned men, sword in hand, drove them resistlessly. When at last the wild tumult rolled out again through the further gate, Ellison, shivering a little at what he saw around, drew back into the compound, and sat limply in the shade to wait what should happen next.

It was, perhaps, an hour later when, with a band of sable retainers ranged in loose order about him, a turbaned man in blue Arab cotton entered the compound by his lame companion's side, and Ellison, noting the embroidery upon the tattered robe and the silver-buckled sword-belt of beautiful leather-work, tried to recall a suitable salutation for a person of rank as he rose to his feet.

"Greeting and peace to you, stranger," said the new comer in the northern tongue. "We thank you for helping our brother; but why, after facing the heathen for many days, did you not join and help us to cut these devil-worshippers down?"

"I am a peaceful trader, and I only held them from burning this factory," Ellison answered as best he could. The other laughed, as speaking very slowly, he said: "And we are also traders, but we carry the sword as well, as our fathers did before us when they first came out of the East. Well, again we thank you, and you shall trade in safety so long as I rule this town. By Allah! if such are your peaceful traders, what are the white soldiers like? And now, you faint with hunger, there is food in the headman's house."

Ellison, who had dined many times in very curious company since he came to Africa, thankfully agreed, and after

the first sufficient meal he had eaten for several days, lay down on a roll of matting to sleep for twelve hours on end. The new comer, who was evidently a man of mark, proved as good as his word, and a few months wrought a radical change in Kabunda town. Instead of the ghastly fetish-house, a school was set up, such a one as may be found in many Moslem villages in the interior. Drastic regulations took the place of chaotic misrule, and a gray-bearded man of yellow skin, who had come from the desert's edge, replaced the naked fetish-priest as public instructor. Lines of swarthy carriers came down the forest-trails bearing gums and spices, feathers and leather-work, worth much upon the coast; and if Ellison sold but little poisonous gin, his commerce in cloth and hardware increased rapidly. This story of conquest and improvement has been repeated many times before in that region of forest, as the few adventurous traders and the frontier officials know.

So the trade of the factory flourished

Macmillan's Magazine.

exceedingly, until Ellison sold the goodwill to a large African firm, and then it came to a signal failure, because of a tipsy agent who would not understand that he now had to deal with people who were not savages. Meantime, Ellison had gone home with sufficient to start him in England as a junior partner in another West Coast firm; and there he found one who had patiently waited all the trying time. He is married now, and when last he told the story, not so very long ago, he added that his swarthy friends had voluntarily ceded jurisdiction to a resident officer, and had several times helped the government through troubles in the bush; but at last, through some blunder of the officials over the hated hut-tax, they had marched out of Kabunda and gone back to the north. Ellison also stated that the authorities thus lost faithful friends and allies, and that, if ever the forest-patrols should meet them under arms, it would go hard with our West Indian soldiers unless they played the man.

Harold Bindloss.

THE MADONNETTA.

From the rocks where the pine-trees stand
At the meeting of sea and land
She looks out o'er the sea,
And the Child-God on her arm
Keeps the Fisher from harm,—
"May peace go with thee."

Towards the East where He worked and died,
The land of the Crucified,
She gazes nor turns away,
And God's light pauses a space
To rest on her dear face
At the spring of each day.

Tho' storms may beat on the strand,
Solemn and still and grand
She heeds not their wrath,
But the ships that sail in the Blight
By day and through darksome night
She speeds on their path.

When at midday the sun, risen high,
Tunes water and air and sky
To one blue common chord,
Then myrtle and thyme at her feet
Wrap in incense pure and sweet,
The Elect of the Lord,

And the winds and the pines and the waves
Sing in murmurous staves,
And repeat, without cease,
The words from her lips that fall,—
"God's mercy rest on all,
And on all be peace."

The Speaker.

E. H.

AMERICA'S NEW EMPIRE.

Spain has at last yielded to the demands of the United States, and that great tropical dominion, the Philippine Archipelago, has, in addition to Porto Rico and Hawail, and possibly Cuba, passed into the hands of America. What will she do with her new Empire? Will she so occupy and rule it as to increase the happiness of the races that dwell within it, and to develop and improve her own polity, or will she make the first grand failure of the Anglo-Saxon race in the government of inferior races? Will she, that is, apply herself earnestly and with single-mindedness to her great task, or will she, through a mixture of moral timidity, self-distrust and blindness to her true destiny, half refuse, and so wholly spoil, the great opportunity thus presented to her? These are questions that the thinking part of the

other half of the Anglo-Saxon race are asking with the deepest interest and concern. Englishmen trust and believe that America will, in the end, choose the true path, but they are necessarily most anxious that at this the critical moment, the moment of the first step, America should make no false start. We do not seriously fear that Britain's anxiety lest America shall neglect to take up her responsibilities is in any great danger of being misunderstood in the States. Still, lest our attitude should by chance be misrepresented, let us state clearly that if we thought merely of England's own selfish interests, rather than of those of the race, we should wish America to shrink from, and so miss, the opportunity presented to her. A Machiavelian British statesman would most certainly wish America first to make an

unsuccessful attempt to govern, and then to abandon, her over-sea possessions. If America failed, as the Continental Powers have failed, to rule tropical possessions, the gain, from a narrow, selfish standpoint, would be ours. But we are glad to think that no such feeling exists here, and that there is no section of British opinion which does not desire that America shall succeed in the development of her new Empire. We ask, then, the people of America to believe that the advice and encouragement so eagerly and strongly pressed upon them from this side, is absolutely genuine and sincere. A leading English statesman and a leading English political thinker have lately urged on America the need of starting her new Empire on sound and strong lines. Mr. Chamberlain, in his powerful article in the Christmas number of *Scribner*, points out to the people of the United States how their new Empire, instead of proving a burden on those who care most for the welfare of the commonwealth, may prove a source of strength and of public virtue. Mr. Benjamin Kidd, in his little book, "*The Control of the Tropics*," just published by Macmillan and Co., takes up the same theme, and with the utmost lucidity and power lays down the true principles upon which a Western people should deal with tropical dependencies. These two articles—Mr. Chamberlain, it may be noted, quotes largely from Mr. Kidd—taken together, may be said to constitute England's appeal to America. It is an appeal neither selfish nor interested, and if it fails, our disappointment will be, not that this country has suffered, but that our own flesh and blood have preferred the smug safety of their vast parish to the responsibilities and duties of a wider outlook, moral and political.

The main, the essential, principle which the Americans must pursue in

establishing their sway over their new Empire is that in every case the government set up must be for the benefit of the peoples governed. They must give the Philippines, that is, not the government which will appear to conduce most to the benefit of the United States, nor, again, the government which some fraction of the people of the Philippines seem to demand. To do so would be to make a capital error in the Imperial art. What the Americans must consider is what scheme of government will be most productive of happiness to the races governed. The government of a subject race is a trust, and the rulers of the protecting and controlling people must never forget that they are in the position of trustees, and bound, like trustees, to think first of the interests of the subject of the trust. They must not, because at home they believe in representative government and elective institutions, rush to endow the people of the tropics with similar powers. They must rather consider, not whether voting is good in the abstract, but whether an electoral system is likely or not to be conducive to the prosperity, moral and physical, of the Philippines. More important still is it that America should not look to making any direct gain out of her possessions. It seems a natural thing for a nation which believes in protection to include the Philippines in its tariff,—*i.e.*, to shut out the rest of the world, and to make the Philippines get all they want from America. But this is in fact to make the Philippines a close preserve for the American manufacturer,—*i.e.*, to set up the old colonial system, the system which we once had, and which France has to this day. Yet, reasonable as this may seem, to a people accustomed as are the Americans to protection, it means ruin in the case of a dependency. Spain governed her colonies on that principle, and look at the result.

They were destroyed commercially by their dependence on the mother-country. If America seeks to make her new Empire her tied customer she will infallibly ruin her tropical possessions. We say this, not because we want an open market in the Philippines. America need not, and ought not, to think for a moment about our susceptibilities,—we shall do very well, whatever policy she adopts. What America must think of alone is what will suit the Philippines,—what will make them prosperous. But that is not making them a tied house and re-establishing the old colonial system. The interest of the governed, that alone must be her guide, not any desire to benefit her own merchants, or, again, to do this country a good turn.

Curiously enough, the ideal principle of colonial government was never better stated for popular use than by a great American,—General Grant. Mr. Chamberlain quotes from General Grant a striking passage which, while describing our system of governing dependencies, lays down the true system: "England governs her own colonies, and particularly those embracing the people of different races from her own, better than any other nation. She is just to the conquered, but rigid. She makes them self-supporting, but gives the benefit of labor to the laborer. She does not seem to look upon the colonies as outside possessions which she is at liberty to work for the support and aggrandizement of the Home Government." Grant, in fact, saw that England succeeds, and we should add, *only* succeeds, because she has an ethical basis for her Empire. No doubt the people of England do not realize this consciously, though they do unconsciously, when they say we must act justly and fairly to the Empire. No doubt, also, we blundered into our system, little by little, rather than set it up on abstract grounds. Still, the fact

remains that what keeps our Empire together, what gives us a really able body of administrators, what secures us from revolt, and what, to a great extent, ennobles our home politics, is the fact that "the interests of the governed" is our rule of empire. If America keeps that in mind, the petty difficulties which she now dreads will disappear. She will find the men—West Point, at the beginning, will give her plenty of good administrators—and she will find also that the government of dependencies will not corrupt, but tend to purify, her home administration. We see that Mr. Carnegie is said to have declared to the President that India was the curse of England. No greater mistake could possibly be made, and none but a very reckless thinker would ever have made such a statement. India is a great, or, if you will, a terrific responsibility, but who can say that a man who accepts an onerous trust and carries it out faithfully is cursed thereby? Men are far more often cursed by the lack of responsibilities. They are "drowned in security," in their own material welfare, and in their want of real difficulties with which to grapple. Depend upon it, the men who have to deal with the terrible difficulties which the Indian Government occasionally encounters, are not made worse, but better, citizens thereby. With the allegation that an over-sea Empire would mean increased corruption in America, Mr. Chamberlain deals very well. He shows that our politics have been purified, not made more corrupt, as the Empire has increased. And here we may note that Mr. Chamberlain also touches upon one very important practical question,—the question of big salaries. If the Americans try to pay small salaries to their colonial administrators they will almost certainly run on the rock of corruption. They want to insist on a very

high standard, moral as well as intellectual, in their Imperial Civil servants, and they will only be able to insist on it if they make these posts desirable enough to attract really good men, and valuable enough to make dismissal a very severe penalty.

We have but one more word to urge. America originally taught us how to govern our Empire. By their righteous and vehement refusal to submit to a system under which the Colonies were to be used for the benefit, and expected to serve the interests, of the mother-country, the States taught us a great lesson. They need not be too

proud to relearn that lesson from those they originally taught. All we want America to do is to start her Empire on true lines. If she does that, all will be well, and she will be able to make any modifications in our colonial system that a difference of circumstances may require. We implore her not to shrink from or to shirk her great duty, but to accept it and carry it out in the spirit in which her people entered upon the recent war with Spain. They did not shirk that duty. They must not shirk those which are directly derived from it.

The Spectator.

THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION.

While biologists have been exerting themselves to discover the particular branch of our family-tree where we parted company from our cousins the apes, archeologists have been trying to ascertain the exact part of the earth's surface where man first emerged from the savage state and acquired the rudiments of culture. Palestine, China, India and Egypt have all been claimed, generally on *a priori* grounds, as the first seat of civilization, but of late years everything has tended to assign the honor to a valley in Western Asia, and the recent American excavations on the site of the ancient city of Nippur have practically put the matter beyond doubt. The narrative of the leader of the earlier of these expeditions was reviewed at length in the Academy of September 11, 1897, and April 30, 1898; and later researches have all gone to confirm the views there stated. It can now be confidently asserted that the delta at the head of the Persian Gulf formed by the

estuaries of the Tigris and Euphrates, was the spot where civilized man first appeared.

The recent discoveries show that in 7000 B.C. this Mesopotamia, or Land-between-the-rivers, was inhabited by a race to whom many names have been given, but who are now generally called by Orientalists the Sumerians. They seemed to have belonged to the great Mongoloid or "Yellow" variety of the human species; they spoke an agglutinative language (*i.e.*, its compound words were formed by the mere stringing together of unaltered roots); they had beardless faces and (probably) snub noses, and they seem to have had black hair. There is some reason to suppose that they originally came from a colder and more hilly country than Mesopotamia, but under what circumstances there is no evidence to show. What is certain is, that at the date mentioned they had already been settled there for many centuries, or even millennia, and that

they had there developed a very high state of civilization. At an age when the Egyptians were still using chipped flints for weapons and tools, the Sumerians were making daily use of copper and bronze; their pottery already showed an excellency of quality and design approaching that of the later Greeks; they had devised a vast system of irrigation by means of canals; and they had constructed out of sun-burnt bricks stately palaces and temples equipped with drains and keyed arches. But perhaps their greatest advance was in the art of writing, by means of which they left behind them records engraved on soft clay in the characters afterwards known as cuneiform, but which then bore traces of the original picture-writings from which they had developed. When we consider the length of time that must have been required for the perfection of these inventions, it seems certain that the Sumerians must have been settled on the Euphrates at least 8,000 years before the Christian era.

The history of this people, so far as we know it, shows the eternal warfare forced upon civilized races who live in contact with barbarian neighbors. Their earliest historical monument (about 4500 B.C.) exhibits them pressed hard by the wandering Semites of the north, who had probably poured down upon the cultivated land from the Arabian desert. Soon after this, the attack must have overpowered the defence, and Semite kings appear as rulers of the country. But these primitive members of the Semitic race must have proved more amenable to civilization than their cousins the Arabs or their poor relations the Jews, in later times. During their centuries of struggle with the older inhabitants of the country they gradually adopted the Sumerian culture and turned it into the channel of foreign conquest. Under their sway Mesopotamian armies went out to the

conquest of the then known world, until they touched the shores of the Mediterranean and took possession of Cyprus. The whole of Western Asia, perhaps as far south as the Punjab, was, at one time or another, subject to them; and when a colony of Semitic emigrants from Mesopotamia founded the kingdom of Assyria, the empire of the world followed them. But the bulk of the natives who remained behind in what may now be called, from its chief city, Babylonia, remained faithful to their national traditions. Although the ancient language of Sumer gave place to a Semitic dialect as a means of daily intercourse, the knowledge of it was kept on foot for religious purposes, while periodical returns to Sumerian methods seem to have been common. So late as 648 B.C. a revival of Sumerian feeling occurred, during which the citizens of Babylon wrote Sumerian as volubly, and no doubt as incorrectly, as the monks of the Middle Ages did Latin.

It does not, of course, follow that because the valley of the Euphrates was the earliest spot where civilization appeared, that it was, therefore, the only center from which it spread. Yet this theory is extremely likely to be true. The Greeks, from whom all modern Europe takes its civilization, said that they were themselves the pupils of the Phœnicians. But the Phœnicians were an Assyrian colony, and the Assyrians, as we have seen, owed their civilization to the Sumerians. Ancient Egypt, also, as we every day see more clearly, was mainly indebted to Mesopotamia for her arts; the retention of pictorial writing after every other nation had adopted the better system of written characters, being nearly her sole indigenous characteristic. China, too, has long been deposed on chronological grounds from her self-claimed place as the oldest of nations, while the Rev. C. J. Ball, and the late Terrien de la

Couperie, have shown good reasons for supposing that she owes her language and the groundwork of her culture to an historical connection with the Sumerians. There remains India, but as the very earliest record of civilization there cannot be dated earlier than 3000 B.C., and her conquerors in pre-Christian times have always come upon her from the north, it must be a bold man who would assert that Babylonla received her culture from India rather than India from Babylonla. And there is another reason why it is extremely probable that the Sumerians were really the original distributors as well as the first possessors of culture. The traditions of every nation attribute the beginnings of its civilization to the use of cereals, and it is obvious that the nation who first hit upon the idea of supporting itself by an easily produced food, capable of being stored for an indefinite length of time, must have obtained an immense advantage in the struggle for existence over tribes compelled to range over a vast amount of ground, in search either of game or of pasture for their flocks. Now, Mesopotamia, where the rich silt left by the periodical overflow of two mighty rivers produces a soil of inexhaustible fertility, is the original home of the wheat plant, which there grows wild, and it was, therefore, in Mesopotamia that the gathering of men into cities first became possible. One might go further, and say that, without some such portable food as corn or flour, the marches through thinly populated tracts of the Semitic kings of Mesopotamia on their way to Syria and India would never have been undertaken.

However that may be, there is no doubt that Babylonian civilization re-

ceived a great impetus from the success of those distant raids. Without them, the arts would have been at a standstill for want of materials; for the soil of Babylonla produced hardly anything but corn and clay. The blocks of diorite, from which the most ancient statues were carved, had to be imported from the Sinaitic peninsula, teak for building from India, and cedar from Lebanon. And these commodities were generally sent in the shape of tribute imposed after a successful foray. On these raids, too, the nation depended for the supply of slaves which relieved the free-born Babylonian from many of the cares of life. The carrying away into Babylon of whole tribes was a tradition there long before the time of the Jews, and the Babylonians practised slave-holding on a larger scale than any nation before or since. Without the troops of slaves who filled the Babylonian palaces and temples, tilled the fields, and manufactured luxuries for sale, Babylonla would never have become as she did the mart of the ancient world, and have accumulated such great wealth that on her conquest by Alexander he is said to have found in her cities more than £30,000,000 in coined money. So true is it that leisure, rather than necessity, is the mother of invention, and that war generally forms a stimulus rather than a drawback to the arts of peace. If, as some students of science have dreamed, it one day becomes possible to renew the exhausted tissues of the human body by some chemical process, instead of by feeding, as we now do, upon plants and animals, the world may make as great a stride forward in the path of culture as she did when the Sumerians first emerged from savagery.

F. Legge.

